

THE
WITNESSES

OF THE

RESURRECTION

OF

JESUS CHRIST

RE-EXAMINED:

AND THEIR

TESTIMONY

Proved entirely Consistent.

By SAMUEL CHANDLER.

Firmissimis enim et sanctissimis testimoniis virorum optimorum causa communita est.

Cicer. pro Rosc.

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WITNESSES

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TESTIMONY

BY THE HON. JAMES C. HARRIS

D. D. HARRIS

Printed for J. Harris, at the office of the
Court of Sessions, in the City of New York.

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T H E
W I T N E S S E S
O F T H E
RESURRECTION of *CHRIST*
re-examined, &c.

THE Resurrection of *Christ* is an Article of *the greatest Importance* in Christianity, and it can never be amiss on proper Occasions to review the Evidence by which the Truth of it is supported, and to represent it in all its Circumstances to the Consideration of the Christian World; that hereby they may the better guard themselves against the Endeavours of those who would subvert the Foundation of their Faith and Hope, and be excited to that Care and Diligence in Piety and Virtue, which their Belief of the Resurrection and Glory of the crucified *Jesus* naturally tends to inspire and encourage. This is my Design in *the following Treatise*, in which I shall endeavour to give a fair and impartial Account of *the several Appearances* of *Christ* after his Revival, as they are recorded by the sacred Writers, shew *the Agreement* and exact Consistency of *their Testimony*, and answer *the principal Objections* against them as they have occurred to me in the Course of my Reading; because stating *the Facts*, and vindicating them, will be *the best*

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best Solution of the Difficulties, that are thought to attend this Subject. 'Twill be necessary to trace this Affair from the Beginning.

C H A P. I.

The Sufferings and Glory of Christ expressly foretold by the Prophets.

JESUS CHRIST appealed to the Writings of the Old Testament, that he must suffer and die, and rise again, and enter into his Glory. Thus he bid his Disciples tell no Man of his Transfiguration till after his Resurrection from the Dead*, and immediately informed them how it is written of the Son of Man, that he must suffer many Things, and be set at nought. And again on a different Occasion†: Behold we go up to Jerusalem, and all Things that are written by the Prophets concerning the Son of Man shall be accomplished; for he shall be delivered unto the Gentiles, and shall be mocked, and spitefully entreated, and spit on, and they shall scourge him, and put him to Death, and the third Day he shall rise again. And after his Resurrection he upbraided the Dulness of the two Disciples‡: O Fools, and slow of Heart to believe all that the Prophets have spoken! Ought not Christ to have suffered these Things, and to enter into his Glory? And beginning at Moses, and all the Prophets, he expounded to them all Things concerning himself. And afterwards, when he appeared to the Ten, he says||: These are the Words which I spoke unto you, while I was yet with you, that all Things must be fulfilled which were written in the Law of Moses, and in the Prophets, and in the Psalms,

* Mark ix. 9, 12. † Luke xviii. 31—33. ‡ Luke xxiv. 25—27. || Luke xxiv. 44—46.

concerning me. And he said unto them: Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the Dead the third Day. Other Passages may be mentioned, in which there are plain Intimations of these Things.

And that there are Prophecies relating to the Suffering, the Exaltation, and perpetual Kingdom of some *very extraordinary Person* in the Old Testament Writings, that do not all of them agree to, and correspond with, the Circumstances of any one Person living, when these Prophecies were delivered, nor to any one afterwards till the Time of *Christ*; and that they do all of them truly represent and describe the Events and Circumstances that belong to his Person and Character, is, I think, plain beyond all Contradiction. Of this kind is that Passage of the Psalmist *: *My Flesh also shall rest in Hope. For thou wilt not leave my Soul in Hell, neither wilt thou suffer thy holy One to see Corruption. Thou wilt shew me the Path of Life, in thy Presence is Fulness of Joy, at thy Right-hand are Pleasures for evermore.* These Words are not true of *David* in any literal Sense, and cannot be, without greatly lessening the Force of the Expressions, applicable to him. The hundred and tenth Psalm is another undeniable Instance of this kind; where the Person spoken of is promised by God an universal and compleat Victory over his Enemies, a great Number of willing Subjects to be ruled by *the Rod that proceeded out of Zion*, and an everlasting Priesthood *after the Order of Melchisedec*, different from that of *Aaron*, in which he was to have no Successor, and which was to be joined with the regal Power, and *Session at the Right-hand of God*. In *Isaiab* there are many Passages to the same Purpose, but especially that in his fifty third Chapter, which no one ever attempted to apply to any one Person but *Jesus Christ*, but the

* Psalm xvi. 9, 10, 11.

Interpretation immediately appeared forced and unnatural, and thereby discovered its own Weakness and Impropriety. In this Prophecy, his obscure Birth, his suffering Condition, his *being cut off*, his Sufferings for the Transgressions of the People, and his future Glory and Triumph, *because he poured out his Soul unto Death**, are represented in the most lively Manner. Daniel also expressly declares that MESSIAH the Prince should be cut off, but not for himself, and that the Consequence should be the Destruction of Jerusalem and the Sanctuary; but that nevertheless he should finish Transgression, make an End of Sin, make Reconciliation for Iniquity, bring in everlasting Righteousness, seal up Vision and Prophecy, and be anointed as the Most Holy.

These, and other Passages, that might be mentioned, are so evidently descriptive of the Sufferings and Death, and future Glory of Jesus Christ, as that they could not have been more clearly expressive of them, had they been intended as prophetick Predictions of him; and that they are Prophecies of some illustrious Person, in whom these Characters were all to concur, appears; in that tho' they were delivered at different Times, and by various Writers, yet they relate to the same kind of Events, and describe just the same Circumstances in different Expressions; tho' no one Person, in any of those Times when they were delivered, either did, or could answer to them, or verify the several Particulars foretold. But as they all concur in Jesus Christ, as they are in their plain and literal Sense applicable to him; as they declare he should be cut off, yet that he should not be left in the Grave, but that he should see the Path of Life, have a Portion with the Strong, for this very Reason, *because he poured out his Soul unto Death*, and be possessed of a royal Priesthood, that should never devolve to any other;

* Dan. ix. 24, 26.

as there is no one to whom they can belong but to *Christ* only, in whom they were in their full Extent accomplished ; there is the highest Reason to conclude, that they were originally intended of him, and that he rightly applied them to his own Person and Character. The Prophecy of *Daniel* * is cited by *Christ* himself ; that of the sixteenth Psalm † by *Peter* soon after *Christ*'s Resurrection ; that of the 110th by the Author to the *Hebrews*, and that of *Isaiah* by † *Christ*, by *Philip* and *Paul* ; and cited by the two latter, as Predictions of *Christ*'s Sufferings, and the Glory that should follow ; and till it can be proved, either that they were accomplished in any other Person, or are not in their literal Sense true of *Christ*, or that they were made after the Event ; it will, I think, appear that they were rightly appealed to as Prophecies, and are in Fact Predictions of him, and the Things that happened to him.

But it may be said, that *these Passages mention nothing directly of the Resurrection*. Allowed. But 'tis sufficient that they *necessarily infer it*. For as 'tis expressly asserted, that this extraordinary Person *should be put to Death*, and yet *not see Corruption*, but be anointed as *the Most Holy*, have an *everlasting Priesthood*, and *sit on the Lord's Right-hand till his Enemies were made his Footstool* ; these different Accounts can never be reconciled, but upon the Supposition of his rising from the Dead. And thus *Christ* himself seems to explain it, when he told the two Disciples : *Ought not Christ to have suffered these Things, and to enter into his Glory ?* The Entrance into Glory is the Circumstance *literally* and expressly mentioned, even notwithstanding his Death, to which his Resurrection after Death became absolutely necessary. And therefore the same Passages are justly applied as Predictions of both or either.

* *Mat.* xxiv. 15. † *Acts* ii. 25, &c. † *Luke* xxii. 37.
The

The repeated Insinuations that are thrown out by some Persons, that these and the like Appeals are *Interpolations*, crept in to the Writings of the Evangelists, or that *they invented* them tho' never uttered by *Christ*, and that they *wrote what they pleased* of him long after his Departure, are *mean Suggestions*, and Surmises, that have no Circumstance of Probability to support them. These Appeals to the Old Testament Prophecies are an *intrinsick Evidence* of the Authentickness of these Writings. That a *Messiah* was the common Expectation of the *Jews* about the Time of *Christ*, and that this Expectation was founded on the supposed Prophecies of the Old Testament, is evident beyond all Contradiction. The Notion of such a Person had universally prevailed, not only amongst them, but the *Samaritans*, and all over the East, as *Suetonius* * and *Tacitus* † both assure us ; and this Persuasion was one great Motive that urged on the *Jews* to so obstinate a Rebellion. *Josephus* ‡ also the *Jewish* Historian informs us, that the principal Inducement to the War was, an *ambiguous Prophecy* in their sacred Writings, ambiguous as to the Person to whom 'twas to be applied, that about that Time one from their Country should rule over the Universe. That the High Priest and Council, before whom *Christ* was examined, believed

* Percrebuerat oriente toto vetus & constans opinio, esse in factis ut eo tempore Judæa profecti rerum potirentur. Id de imperatore Romano, quantum eventu postea patuit, prædictum Judæi ad se trahentes, rebellarunt. Sueton. Vespas. c. 4.

† Pluribus persuasio inerat, antiquis sacerdotum litteris contineri, eo ipso tempore fore, ut valesceret Oriens, profectique Judæa rerum potirentur ; quæ ambages Vespasianum ac Titum prædixerant. Sed vulgus, more humanæ cupidinis, sibi tantam factorum magnitudinem interpretati, ne adversis quidem ad vera mutabantur. Tacit. Histor. l. 5. c. 13.

‡ Το δε παρὰν αὐτῆς μαλιστα πρὸς τὸν πόλεμον ἡν χρῆσιμος ἀμφιβολὸς ὁμοίως ἐν τοῖς ἱεροῖς εὐρημένος γραμμασιν, ὡς κατὰ τὸν καιρὸν ἐκείνῳ, ἀπὸ τῆς χωρᾶς τῆς αὐτῶν ἀρξέει τῆς οὐκ ἐκείνης, Joseph. ἀλωτ. l. 6. c. 5. § 4. Vid. Euseb. E. Hist. l. 3. c. 8.

such a Person was to come amongst them, is evident from the Question put to *Christ* at his Trial : *I adjure thee by the Living God, that thou tell us whether thou be the CHRIST, the Son of God § ?* *Christ* did actually assume that Character, and for this Reason was pronounced, as a *Blasphemer* †, worthy of Death. The very Title put on his Cross : *This is Jesus the King of the Jews*, or as the *Jews* would have had it altered : *He said I am the King of the Jews*, demonstrate that he was crucified for assuming the Character of the *Messiah*, which was *King of the Jews* ; a Character that he would never have pretended to, but on the Foundation of the supposed Prophecies of the Old Testament. This therefore remains, I think, uncontestably certain, that there are certain Passages of the Old Testament, that do plainly appear to foretel the Sufferings, and Death, and future Kingdom and Glory of some very extraordinary Person that was to come amongst the *Jews*, that these Predictions were well known to them, that they did expect a *Messiah* or King to appear amongst them in Consequence of them, that the Priests and Pharisees did know that *Christ* assumed this Character, and that they condemned and crucified him on this Account. And if it be certain that *Christ* took on him this Character, 'tis as certain he must appeal to the Old Testament Prophecies for the Support of it; and by Consequence, the Gospel Historians mentioning these Prophecies, and declaring that *Christ* appropriated them to himself, carries in it *the most substantial Mark* of Authentickness, and shews, that this Part of their Writings hath been handed down to us *uncorrupted*, without the least Probability of Alteration or Forgery.

§ *Mat.* xxvi. 63.

† *John* xix. 19, 21.

CHAP. II.

Christ plainly declared his own Sufferings and Resurrection to his Disciples.

AS there are clear and exprefs Prophecies in the Old Testament relating to the Sufferings and Death and Glory of *Christ*, so he exprefly assured his Disciples, that he must die and rise again from the Dead; and that several Times *in the clearest possible Manner*, without the least Obscurity or Ambiguity whatsoever. And in this *Matthew*, *Mark*, and *Luke* exactly agree. Thus, when he came to the Coasts of *Cæsarea Philippi*, he shewed them he must be killed, and be raised again *τη τρίτη ημερα, the third Day*, as *Matthew* and *Luke* *; *μετα τρεις ημερας, after three Days*, as *Mark* †. Again, after the Transfiguration, he charged his Disciples, saying: *Tell the Vision to no Man, until the Son of Man be risen again from the Dead*, according to *Matthew* and *Mark* ‡. Again, when he cast out the dumb Spirit, whilst they abode in *Galilee*, he told them: *The Son of Man shall be betrayed into the Hands of Men, and they shall kill him, and the third Day he shall be raised again*, as *Matthew* and *Mark* ||. *Luke* ¶ only hath: *The Son of Man shall be delivered into the Hands of Men*. Again, going up with them to *Jerusalem*, he told them, *that the Gentiles should mock and scourge and crucify him, and the third Day he shall rise again*, as *Matthew*, *Mark*, and *Luke* §; and finally, just before his Crucifixion, he assured them: *After I am risen again, I will go before you into Galilee*, as *Matthew* and *Mark* relate ††. These Predictions,

* *Mat.* xvi. 21. *Luke* ix. 22. † *Mark* viii. 31. ‡ *Mat.* xvii. 9. *Mark* ix. 9. || *Mat.* xvii. 23. *Mark* ix. 31. †† *Luke* ix. 44. § *Mat.* xx. 19. *Mark* x. 34. *Luke* xviii. 32, 33. †† *Mat.* xxvi. 32. *Mark* xiv. 28.

as to the Sense and Meaning of them, were too clear to be misunderstood.

Against these Passages it hath been objected, that *John says not one Word of Christ's foretelling his Resurrection to his Disciples, and that therefore there is Reason to suspect that all the Predictions of it, inserted in Matthew, Mark and Luke, are Forgery; especially as John denies it all, in those Words*: They knew not the Scriptures, that he must arise again from the Dead.* Whether *John* denies it all or not, the Reader will soon be a Judge. But as to the Passage cited in proof of it, any other Text in the whole Bible might have been cited with equal propriety for the same Purpose. For *John* only says, that *the Disciples as yet knew not the Scriptures*, did not understand that the Scriptures foretold that *Christ* must rise again from the Dead. This was as true, as that they did not know that the Scriptures foretold his Death, because they believed he was not to die at all, or rise again. But how doth it follow from hence, that there were no such Prophecies, or that *Jesus* did not predict his Death and Resurrection according to them, or that *John* denies that *Christ* made any such Predictions at all? That there are such Predictions in the Old Testament, as necessarily imply the Resurrection, hath been shewn; *Christ* therefore who took on him the Character of the Messiah, and knew the Nature of the Prophecies concerning himself, might according to them predict his own Death and Resurrection to his Disciples, tho' they might be ignorant of the Sense of such Scripture Prophecies, and so thro' their own Prejudices not believe what they really predicted. And the very Expression of *John*, as yet they knew not the Scriptures, is to far from an Assertion that there were no Prophecies that implied *Christ's* Resurrection, or that *Christ* never predicted it, that it

* *John* xx. 19.

is on the contrary a plain Intimation that there were such Prophecies, and that the Disciples afterwards both understood and believed them; and therefore it is so far a Confirmation of what the other Evangelists have related, as he and they both agree as to *the Reality and Sense* of the Prophecies, and affirm the Resurrection of *Christ* to be necessary on Account of them.

It is observed by the other Evangelists, that after our Saviour had plainly foretold his Sufferings and Death, his Disciples understood him not. Thus *Mark ix. 32. They understood not that saying*; and *Luke**, *they understood none of these Things, and this Saying was hid from them, neither knew they the things that were spoken*; and from hence some of the great Masters of Reason argue, that this is very surprising, that twelve Men together should not understand such plain Expressions, and that one would be apt to think, that they were Persons of the lowest, dullest Apprehension. But I am apt to imagine that such Objections as these to the Gospel History come from Persons more desperately dull than these Apostles. For they really did understand the meaning of these Expressions perfectly well. Thus when Jesus told his Disciples he must go to Jerusalem, and suffer many things, and be killed and be raised again the third Day†; Peter took him and began to rebuke him, saying: Be it far from thee Lord. This shall not be unto thee, i. e. Thou shalt not suffer many things, nor be killed, nor raised again. And at another time, when he foretold the same, Matthew tells us‡, *They were exceeding sorry*. Sorry at what? Sorry at something they did not understand? Ridiculous. No. Sorry for what they too well understood; to hear him talk of being betrayed, and killed and rising again; things that never entered into their Conceptions, and Circumstances they thought incompatible with his Cha-

* Luke xviii. 34. † Mat. xvi. 22. ‡ Mat. xvii. 23.

rafter, as Son of Man and Messiah. How then did they not understand such Sayings as these? Why, because they did not understand how that could ever come to pass, which these Sayings imported, and plainly expressed. They had no Conception of a Messiah that was to be scourged and mocked, and spit on and killed, and raised to Life on the third Day. And therefore when *Christ* charged them to tell no Man what they had seen in the Transfiguration *, *till the Son of Man was risen from the Dead, they kept that Saying with themselves, questioning one with another, what the Rising from the Dead should mean, or what he meant by the Son of Man's rising from the Dead; because they thought he was never to die, and therefore could not possibly conceive how he could rise from the Dead.* Worldly Grandeur, Victory, Conquest of the Gentiles, external Pomp and Glory, were the Characters they had annexed to the Messiah; and to all this they added *his abiding for ever, or Perpetuity of Dominion.* But how these things could be reconciled with his being delivered to the Gentiles, with Infamy, Suffering and Crucifixion; this was the Mystery they could not understand. Hence the Insults of the chief Priests, mocking him, and of the Scribes, Elders and Pharisees reproaching him on the Cross †: *If he be the King of Israel, let him now come down from the Cross, and we will believe in him.* Hence the Despair of his own Disciples after his Death ‡: *We trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel.* Hence their Backwardness to believe him risen from the Dead, because contrary to their fixed Prejudices that he was not to die, and because they had little or no Conception of his Resurrection. How then could they possibly understand such kind of Predictions, *i. e.* either how they could be true, or how they could be accomplished? Instead there-

* Mark ix. 10. † Mat. xxvii. 41, 42. ‡ Luk. xxiv. 21.

fore of *suspecting any fraudulent Design by this Confession of the Dulness of his Disciples*, I am rather fully convinced it wholly cuts off all just Ground of Suspicion of any such Intention; because the certain *known Prejudices* of the Disciples, and the whole Jewish Nation, naturally account for it; and a contrary Representation would have been inconsistent with their Circumstances, and therefore wholly incredible.

C H A P. III.

Christ declared his Death and Resurrection, publickly to the Jews.

THE foregoing Passages, relating to the Death and Resurrection of *Christ*, seem to have been delivered in the hearing of the Disciples only; but there are other Places, from whence it most certainly appears, that he spoke of these Events in a much more publick manner, and before a promiscuous Company, so that the Scribes and Pharisees could not be ignorant of what he had said concerning them. When certain of them would see a Sign of him, he said to them *: *An evil and adulterous generation seeketh a Sign, but no Sign shall be given to it, save the Sign of Jonas the Prophet.* i. e. A Sign of somewhat the same Nature and kind as *Jonas* was to the *Ninivites*; for as he was *three Days and Nights in the Whale's Belly*, and then delivered out of it, so shall the Son of the Man be *three Days and three Nights in the Heart of the Earth*, and then be as wonderfully restored alive out of it; on which account as *Jonas* was a Sign to the *Ninivites*, so shall

* *Mat. xii. 38, 39, 40.*

the Son of Man be to this Generation. His Deliverance from the Fish was a Sign that God sent him, and my miraculous Deliverance from the Grave shall be a Demonstration that God also hath sent me. Saint *Luke* exactly agrees with *Matthew* in the Nature of the Sign, tho' he hath not so fully expressed it*. *This is an evil Generation. They seek a Sign, and there shall no Sign be given it, but the Sign of Jonas the Prophet; for as Jonas was a Sign to the Ninivites, so shall also the Son of Man be to this Generation.* Now *Jonas* was no otherwise a Sign to the *Ninivites* but as saved from his three Days Confinement in the Whale, which every *Jew* understood; and therefore *Christ* could be no otherwise a Sign to the Generation in which he lived, resembling that of *Jonas*, than by being raised out of the Earth, after a three Days Burial in it. So that *Matthew* and *Luke* absolutely agree without any other Variation than what is common in all Authors writing of the same Subject; one delivering more fully what the other records in a shorter manner; and from both 'tis plain, that these Words were spoken publicly to the Scribes and Pharisees, and that the Truth of his being *the Son of Man* was put upon his being laid in the Earth and raised out of it, and his herein resembling *Jonas's* Burial and miraculous Deliverance. These Words are therefore a very plain Prediction of his Death and Resurrection, which those who heard them could not be at a loss for the meaning of. And this Sign our blessed Saviour gave them more than once. Thus when the Sadducees and Pharisees tempted him another time, desiring him to shew them a Sign from Heaven, he answers them partly in the same Words†: *No Sign shall be given them but the Sign of Jonas the Prophet.* *Mark* only says‡: *There shall be no Sign, viz. from Heaven, given to this Generation:* And this was the precise

* *Luke* xi. 29, 30. † *Mat.* xvi. 1. ‡ *Mark.* viii. 11, 12.

Answer to their Demand of a Sign from Heaven. He refused to give them any Sign from thence, because they had no right to demand it, and because a Sign from thence was by no means necessary for their Conviction. But whence doth it follow, that because *Mark* doth not relate the last Words, that therefore *Christ* did not speak them? Or that *Matthew* who was an *Ear-witness*, is to be credited in nothing but what *Mark* confirms, who cannot be proved to be so? Or that *Christ* said and did nothing but what is in *Mark's* Gospel? Or that *Mark* really knew, or undertook to relate every thing that *Christ* said or did? *Matthew's* Testimony in this Report is as good as any other Eye or Ear-witness could be; and from these Accounts 'tis evident, that the Scribes and Pharisees and Sadducees were all foretold of the Death and Burial and Resurrection of *Christ*, by our Lord himself; and the Prediction was such as they could not easily mistake the meaning of. But 'tis objected that *this Prediction is false* in fact in two Respects.

1. *As to Time.* 'Tis said, that the Son of Man was to lye three Days and three Nights in the Heart of the Earth, as *Jonah* did three Days and three Nights in the Whales Belly; whereas *Jesus* lay but the time of one Day and an half, i. e. two Nights and a Day if he did that; for 'tis not known when the Body was gone. It could not be found at the End of the second Night. To this I answer,

1. That the Time of our Saviour's lying in the Grave may be expressed very different Ways. He may be truly said to have lain in it *three Days*, as he was buried *Friday*, lay in it all *Saturday*, and did not rise till the Morning of *Sunday*. In another View it may be said, that he lay in the Grave only *two whole Nights, one whole Day, and part of two others*; so that tho' he was in his Grave three different distinct Days, yet not the whole of each Day, as each consisted

sisted of 24 Hours. The *Jews* computed their Days by *νυχθημερα*, reckoning their Night and Day for one whole Day, from Sunset to Sunfet, as did also the * *Athenians*; so that whatever was done on any Part of that four and twenty Hours, if on the last half Hour, was equally ascribed to that Day, as if done on the first half Hour of it. So that three Days and three Nights are *τρια νυχθημερα*, three natural Days, which consisted each of a Night and Day, or twenty four Hours to compleat them. *Christ* was three such distinct Days in his Grave, *Friday*, *Saturday* and *Sunday*, tho' not the whole of each, but yet such a Part of each, as abundantly justifies the Expression in the Evangelist. *Theophilaet* hath given the plain Interpretation †. You must understand, says he, three Days and three Nights not intire, but in Part. He died on the Preparation, that was one. He was dead the whole Sabbath, that was another; and he remained dead all that Night which belonged to the Lord's Day. So that three natural Days, each consisting of a Night and Day, are reckoned in Part; after which manner we frequently compute. An Instance almost exactly parallel we have in the Book of *Ester*, taken notice of by Dr. ‡ *Whitby*. *Ester* orders the *Jews*: Fast ye for me, and neither eat nor drink three Days, Night or Day. I also and my Maidens will fast likewise, and so will I go in unto the King. And yet the History expressly tells us ||, that on the third Day she went to the King. Thus also what is called forty Days and forty Nights in one Verse is expressed by forty Days in another §. And thus the natural Day is frequently denoted, and what is done any Part of those Days, is ascribed to

* *Aul. Gel.* 1 iii. c. 2. *Censor. de Die. Nat.* c. 23.

† *Theoph.* in loc. *Kidd. on the Mes.* p. 1. p. 104. and p. 2. p. 61. *Ec. Fol. Ed. Wolf. cur. ibid.*

‡ *Comm. in Mat.* xii. 38, *Ec. Est.* iv. 16.

|| *Est.* v. 1. § *Gen.* vii. 12, 17.

the Day itself in general, and said to be doing so many Days. See 1 *Sam.* xxx. 12. 1 *Kin.* xii. 5, 12. comp. 1 *Kin.* xix. 8. But I observe farther,

2. That 'tis evident that the Expression, *He should be three Days and three Nights in the Heart of the Earth*, was equivalent to that other Phrase, *After three Days*. Thus it was understood and explained by the High Priests and Pharisees themselves, who may be allowed to explain their own Sense of the Prediction referred to: *That Deceiver said, whilst he was yet alive, μετα τρεῖς ημερας after three Days I will rise again* *. Now let it be observed that *after three Days* doth not necessarily signify, either in the Nature of the Thing, or in constant Acceptation, after three Days, or three times 24 Hours shall be compleatly expired; but after three distinct Days shall have taken Place, whether every Hour of the Day be exactly included or not. And 'tis evident the Scribes and Pharisees understood it thus. For as they demanded the Watch to be set but *till the third Day*, 'tis plain, that had *Christ* risen any time the third Day to their Conviction, they must have owned the Prophecy to have been accomplished, and that they had no Imagination of his pretending to rise after it; and therefore they must have reckoned *Friday* for one of those Days, tho' he was buried very near the Conclusion of it, their *Sabbath* for the next, and *Sunday* for another of them, whatsoever part of it the Resurrection should have happened in. Had they imagined *after three Days* to have meant *three compleat Days* each of twenty four Hours, they should have demanded the Watch to have been set till *Monday*, and the Hour of it exactly answering that on *Friday* when he was buried. But of this they never dreamt, because they asked the Guard only till *Sunday* inclusive; which they knew to be the Day fixed for the Resurrection, by

* *Mat.* xxvii. 63.

the Prediction ; and had it been deferred till *Monday*, there would have been four Days instead of three, contrary to the Prophecy. And in common Acceptation the Expression, *after three Days*, may as well mean after three Days have really taken Place, tho' the whole of each is not expired, as three intire Days of 24 Hours, all actually passed and gone. What is begun on *Friday*, continues doing all *Saturday*, and is finished on *Sunday*, is three Days in finishing, or is finished after three Days, viz. commenced, or as the Accomplishment doth not actually take place, till after three Days have run on in a regular Succession of each other.

And in this Sense the Expression is frequently understood. Thus God orders the *Jews* מִקֶּצֶה שָׁנָה שְׁשָׁנִים *from the End of, or after three Years*, μετατρία ετη as the 70, *thou shalt bring forth all the Tythe of thine Increase**; which nevertheless was to be done every third Year. When the People came to *Reboboam*, for the Redress of their Grievances, he says to them †: *Depart yet for three Days, and then come unto me.* And yet all the People came to him on the third Day, as the King had appointed, saying: *Come to me again the third Day.* In like manner, when the Parents of *Jesus* missed him in their return Home from *Jerusalem*, 'tis said they went back, and *after three Days found him in the Temple* ‡, i. e. on the third Day; for they missed him *after the first Day's Journey*, returned the second Day to the City, and found him the third in the Temple. Several other Instances may be mentioned. *Homer* also seems to have used the Preposition μετα, which properly signifies ||, *After*, for *within*, or *during*. Μεθ' ημεραν is a Form of Speech well

* Deut. xiv. 28.—xxvi. 12. comp. † 1 King xii. 5, 12.
‡ Luk. ii. 44, 45, 46. || See Glafs Phil. Sac. p. 493. Edit
1711. Ibid. p. 494.

known amongst the Greeks, and literally signifies, *After a Day*, but is used by the best Writers * in Opposition to *νυκτωρ* or *δια νυκτος*, by *Night*, to denote, in the *Day time*, or to *Day*. *Josephus*, the *Jewish* Historian, hath an Expression exactly parallel, who speaking of *Isaac* says, † *ον ευθυς μετ' ουδου ημεραν περιτεμνυσι*, whom they immediately circumcised after the eighth Day, i. e. on the eighth Day. Another Instance, not taken notice of by any that I have seen, is in *Philo* ‡, where *Joseph* interpreting the *Butler's* Dream tells him, that the three Roots of the Vine signify three Days, *μεθ' ας* after which, says he, the King shall forgive and restore thee, i. e. within which, for he was restored on the third Day. And thus *Josephus* explains it: *εν τοσανταις ημεραις* ||. Within so many Days. Nor indeed could this Expression, *μετα τρεις ημερας*, after three Days, be well misunderstood. For sometimes the Resurrection of *Christ* was expressly predicted to be on the third Day †. The third Day he shall be raised again. Yea, to demonstrate that the Expressions, after the third Day, and on the third Day, were equivalent, and understood to denote the same Time, *Mark* represents *Christ* as saying on the same Occasion, That after three Days the Son of Man shall rise again §, which *Matthew* and *Luke* express by, he shall be raised again on the third Day **. Yea, as some Persons suppose the whole Affair of the Resurrection to be a Cheat, and that either the Disciples stole away the dead Body, or, they are not certain which, the living Body supposed to be dead, on the third Day; 'tis evident beyond all doubt, that they understood

* See *Demost.* p. 609. c. *Lucian.* *Tim.* p. 91. *Plat. Rep.* p. 516. *Lyf. Orat.* p. 80. *Plut. Pyth.* p. 398. E. † *Joseph. Antiq.* l. 1. c. 22. citante *Raphel. in Annot. ex Xen. ad Mat.* xxvii. 63. ‡ *de Joseph.* p. 54. l. 48. *Edit. Mang.* || *Antiq.* l. 2. c. 5. §. 2. † *Mat.* xvii. 23. *Mar.* ix. 3. § *Mar.* viii. 31. ** *Mat.* xvi. 21. *Luk.* ix. 27.

the Sense of the Prophecy in this manner, and knew that 'twas thus understood by every Body else; or their stealing it away the third Day would have spoiled all their Scheme, and rendred it impossible for them to have supported their Imposture. For the Objection would have been obvious to every one: There must be a Fraud in this Affair, since you pretend that he was raised one whole Day before the fixed Time. The Supposition therefore of *the Fraud* in stealing away the Body, or *the Charge* that the Prophecy was not accomplished in its proper Time, must necessarily, one or other of them be retracted. But,

2. 'Tis said that this Prophecy is false in another respect, as the Prediction was not fulfilled: Because the Sign promised to be given was not given to those it was promised to. For if no Sign was to be given to that evil and adulterous Generation, but the Sign of Jonas the Prophet, the only Proof of Jesus his being the Messiah depended on that Sign being given, or that Prophecy being fulfilled to the Satisfaction of that evil and adulterous Generation. Unquestionably Christ's being the Messiah did depend on his Resurrection from the Grave according to this Prophecy, and on his rising during that Generation, and on their having sufficient Evidence to convince them of the Truth of it. But whence doth it appear that the Prophecy was to be fulfilled to their Satisfaction? Suppose they were too unreasonable to be satisfied? Incurably determined never to be satisfied? Supposing they believed in a God, that was so limited by the Laws of Matter, as not to be able to raise him? Supposing they believed no Resurrection, Angels, Spirits, or a future State? And once more, supposing they were an evil, adulterous, profligate, hypocritical, persecuting, begotted Generation? In such Circumstances how was it possible to satisfy them? Christ never did promise thus to satisfy them. And yet, as he

rose during that Generation, and *shewed himself alive by many infallible Proofs*, by such Proofs as did actually convince even many of that very Generation, and what is extremely wonderful, *many * of the Priests themselves*, who became obedient to the Faith, and others † of the Pharisees; *Christ* was really *better than his Promise*, and did even satisfy that *very Generation*, many of them, of the Truth of his Resurrection; and for all that can be proved to the contrary, some of those very Priests and Pharisees, in whose hearing he delivered this Prophecy. And if they, or any of them, were *not satisfied*, it was because they demanded unreasonable Satisfaction. For the same Proofs that satisfied their Brethren of the Priests and Pharisees, might I presume have *reasonably satisfied* the rest of them; unless it be supposed, as I am very sensible *with extream modesty* often is, that all the Men of Sense, Impartiality and Integrity were amongst those who believed not; or unless the unbelieving Priests and Pharisees looked upon *all Faith* as unreasonable, and all the Evidences of Faith as intirely precarious; in which case their Satisfaction will be allowed to be extremely difficult and unlikely. True it is that he did *not rise publicly* before them, nor was *Jonab* thrown out of the Fish publicly before the *Ninivites*. The Prophecy never intimated that he should rise before them, nor did his being a Sign to them in the least depend on it; but on the Truth of his Resurrection, whether they saw it or not, and a Sufficiency of proper Evidence to convince them of that Truth; just as *Jonab* was a Sign to the *Ninivites*, because they had proper Evidence of his signal Deliverance, tho' none of them were themselves probably *personal Witnesses* to it. The Prophecy therefore was literally and punctually fulfilled, and the Insinuation that it was *a Forgery, and falsely*

* *Act. vi. 7.*† *xv. 5.*

fathered on Jesus Christ, will be treated with the Contempt it deserves by every honest and sensible Christian.

From what hath been said, we may (I think) be fairly allowed to keep Possession of our Prophecy, and the plain Sense of it. And as 'twas delivered, once and again, openly and expressly, in the hearing of the Scribes, Pharisees, and Sadducees, 'twas impossible they could be ignorant of it; especially as he at other Times told them expressly of his Death, and returning to Life again, even as *John* assures us.

Thus in the hearing of all the People*: *If I be lifted up from the Earth, I will draw all Men unto me, signifying what Death he should die.* And the People understood him, as appears by their Answer: *We have heard out of the Law, that Christ abideth for ever. How sayest thou the Son of Man must be lifted up?* But if this Prediction of his Death was in any respect obscure, yet nothing can be plainer than these Words†: *I lay down my Life for the Sheep; and therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my Life. No Man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself.* In like Manner he spoke publicly of his returning to Life‡: *I lay down, says he, my Life that I might take it again. I have Power to lay it down, and I have Power to take it again. This Command have I received of my Father;* a Declaration that divided the People in their Judgment concerning him; some of them censuring him for a *possessed Madman*, not understanding how he, who took on himself the Character of the Son of Man, could either die or rise again; whilst others thought what he spoke was inconsistent with *such a Possession*, and his Works above the Power of evil Spirits to perform. He also declared, tho' in a more figurative Manner, that this Resurrection should be in three

* *John* xii. 33, 34. † *John* x. 15, 17, 18. ‡ *Id. ibid.*

Days, when he told the *Jews* * : *Destroy ye this Temple, and in three Days I will raise it up.* And tho' probably they might not attend at first to the direct Meaning of such a Passage, yet when they compared it with *the Sign of Jonas*, and other Assurances he gave them of his Death and Resurrection, they could not well be at a Loss for the true Interpretation of such kind of Expressions, nor ignorant that, according to his own Prediction, he was both to die, and rise again on the third Day. 'Tis evident that he frequently talked with his own Disciples concerning these Events, and of his Ascension to his Father, of his sending down the Promise of the Spirit, and of his raising up the Dead at the last Day. *John*, in his Gospel, hath many Passages of this Nature. His Disciples often reasoned upon these Heads, questioning what these Things should mean ; how they were consistent with his Character, in whom they believed as the Messiah. The Pharisees and Scribes were peculiarly attentive to what he said and did ; and so extraordinary a Doctrine as that of his Death and Resurrection, so frequently and plainly spoken of amongst his Apostles and other Disciples, and concerning which they so freely debated, could not well, in the Nature of the Thing, be kept a Secret ; especially as I do not remember, in any of the Evangelists, one single Prohibition to tell these Things to others ; tho', for the most evident Reasons, he often bid them conceal his Miracles, and tell no Man he was the Messiah.

* *John* ii. 19.

C H A P. IV.

The Priests and Pharisees set a Guard on the Sepulchre of CHRIST.

THE frequent, plain and open Manner in which our Lord spoke of his Death, and Resurrection after three Days, occasioned the Priests and Pharisees to demand of *Pilate*, a proper and sufficient Guard to be set at the Sepulchre, to prevent any Fraud, and hinder his Disciples from imposing on the People, by falsely pretending he was risen from the Dead. Of this *Matthew* gives us the following Account *. *Now the next Day that followed the Day of the Preparation, viz. the Sabbath, which was the Day following his Crucifixion, the Chief Priests and Pharisees came together unto Pilate, saying: Sir, we remember, that that Deceiver said, while he was yet alive: After three Days I will rise again. Command therefore that the Sepulchre be made sure, until the third Day, lest his Disciples come by Night, and steal him away, and say unto the People: He is risen from the Dead. So the last Error shall be worse than the first. Pilate said unto them: Ye have a Watch, go Ye away, make it as sure as you can; so they went and made the Sepulchre sure, sealing the Stone, and setting a Watch.*

The Reason given for their demanding this Watch, shews that the Priests and Pharisees did not believe this Prediction of the Resurrection. *Command the Sepulchre to be made sure, lest his Disciples come by Night and steal him away.* They imagin'd they had quite spoiled all just Pretensions he could

* *Matthew* xxvii. 62—66.

make to the Messiahship, by crucifying him: But still they remembred the remarkable Prediction that he would *in three Days rise again*; and tho' probably they never expected it, yet for this very Reason, and in order to prevent all possible Fraud and Imposition in the Case, and the more effectually to falsify the Prediction, they did, as all other Persons would have done in like Circumstances, take care that the Sepulchre should be guarded in such a manner, as that if his Disciples were inclin'd to commit any Fraud, and trump up a *false Resurrection*, it should be absolutely out of their Power. For as the Prediction *had fix'd the third Day* for his Resurrection, by having the dead Body in their Custody till after that Day, they imagined they should abundantly defeat it, and knew they had nothing to fear from it afterwards. But there are several things objected against the Credibility of this Account. As,

1. 'Tis said, that *it appears an irreconcilable Absurdity, that Jesus should so expressly foretell his Resurrection to his Disciples, and say nothing of it plainly to the Scribes and Pharisees; and yet that these should be so alarm'd with the Words of a Man they did not believe, as to watch for it, and the Disciples not understand nor expect it. 'Tis more probable the Priests and Pharisees should not have given themselves the least Concern about it, and the Disciples have been in full Expectation of it.* But this Objection supposes what will never be allowed, *viz.* that Jesus said nothing of his Resurrection plainly to the Scribes and Pharisees, or to others who informed them of it. The contrary hath, I think, been abundantly proved. It supposes also that they *watched for the Resurrection*, which is as impertinent as the former is unreasonable; for neither the Scribes and Pharisees, nor Disciples could, upon their common Prejudices, expect any such Thing; and till these Prejudices were effectually removed, Christ's predicting his

own Resurrection could not produce *the natural and suitable Effect*, such Predictions might otherwise have had on the Disciples, *viz.* their watching for and expecting it. But the Prediction did produce the only natural Effect it could have on the Scribes and Pharisees, *viz.* their taking the utmost Precaution to falsify it, by sending and setting a Watch to prevent the Stealth of the Body, and the Disciples reporting that he was risen from the Dead, when, by having the Body in their Possession, they knew none could contradict them. So that 'tis perfectly consistent, that the Scribes and Pharisees should *never regard* him whilst living, and *yet guard* him when dead; and the true Probability is on the Side of the Evangelist's Account, that nor Priests, nor Pharisees, nor Disciples should look for a Resurrection which they none of them believed; but that the former should act, as their plain Interest lead them to do, *viz.* guard the Sepulchre, till the prefixed Time for the Resurrection by the Prediction was over; but that the latter should give themselves little or no Concern about the Sepulchre, from whence they *scarce ever expected* their crucified Master to return. However, whether the Scribes and Pharisees had any secret Suspicions and Fears of his Resurrection or not, yet still, the Seal and the Watch was the most effectual Method to be satisfied, whatever the Event might be. If, upon the whole, their Judgment was, that the Prediction of his Resurrection would come to nothing, the Watch and the Seal was the natural Way to be sure of it, and to prevent a Surprize. The Disciples could not steal him after such a Precaution; they therefore could not pretend him to be risen to verify his Prediction. The dead Body might have been exposed the fourth Day. The Prediction of his Resurrection would have been *a demonstrated Falshood*; and all his forgoing Miracles, whatsoever

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they were, and howsoever done, must have lost their Credit and Influence. In all Views the Watch and the Seal appear a consistent and *wise Precaution*; and I believe no Set of Men in the World, that had common Sense and Prudence, who had been the chief Instruments in murdering so extraordinary a Person, as the Scribes and Pharisees knew Christ to be, but must, upon their hearing of such a Prediction of a Resurrection, fix'd to a short Time and certain Day after his Death, have taken the same, or a like Method, that the Scribes and Pharisees did.

But I have also *my farther Suspicions*, that this *wicked and adulterous Generation* of Scribes and Pharisees were before-hand determined, whether Christ was to rise or not, *never to own* him for their Christ; but that if he really rose from the Dead, or if they had the strongest Probabilities that he did rise, and the Watch and the Seal should be found ineffectual to answer the first End they aimed at; yet that they were resolved to have it in their Power to secure another End, and with the better Credit to charge the Disciples with *stealing away his Body*. 'Tis plain they had this *in Reserve* by what they said to *Pilate*, and 'tis as certain that they *actually spread* this Report, when they found that the Resurrection had taken Place in spite of all their Precautions to the contrary; and 'tis (I think) as certain, from the Gospel History, that they were *wicked enough* to do this, or any Thing else to gratify their Malice, and maintain their Authority amongst the People.

Whether the Scribes and Pharisees *really suspected* that the Disciples might attempt to *steal away the Body*, and trump up a pretended Resurrection, or not, is more than I can tell, or any one can prove. But I can see no Absurdity in supposing they might. 'Tis true *their Master was dead*. But then the Pretence of a Resurrection was to *obviate*
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If the Scribes and Pharisees had their Suspicions and Fears of a real Resurrection, did they, we are farther asked, *for that Reason seal the Stone, and set a Watch to prevent it? Preposterous Contrivance! Therefore, that the Priests and Pharisees should guard against a Resurrection, fraudulent or real, is in all Views absurd.* Not so absurd as is imagined. Their Fears and Suspicions of somewhat extraordinary to happen after his Death, are extremely consistent with believing, *on the whole*, that he would never rise. They might be persuaded, all Circumstances put together, that his Resurrection would never take Place, and yet have some remaining Jealousies and

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Apprehensions, upon account of his Prediction, that it should. But whether it did or not, their Business was to be sure of no *false Play*, and whatever was the Event, they did not doubt but they should be able to provide against it. The Body remaining in the Sepulchre would have been sufficient Evidence on the one Hand, that there *was no Resurrection*; the Soldiers were Persons *not above Corruption*, and the Priests and Pharisees had Money to suppress any Evidence that might be given on the other, if there was *a real one*. Their Persuasion, that he would *not rise*, might so over-balance their Fears and Suspicions to the contrary, as to induce them to place the Guard and Seal, as the surest Part they could act; or if their Fears of *a real Resurrection* prevailed, the Guard was an Evidence they well enough knew how to *tamper* and deal with, and put it in their Power to vilify a real Resurrection by the Pretence of *a Theft* and a feigned one, as the Event itself abundantly evinced. So that 'tis in all Views suitable to the Character of the Priests, the Scribes and Pharisees, to guard against a Resurrection, whether fraudulent or real.

'Tis said, *that if Jesus never attempted to be the temporal King of the Jews, but explained away all such Notions of the Messiah, the Rulers had the less Reason to fear his real or feigned Resurrection; for surely there was little Need for them or the Priests to fear the Disciples making him a Spiritual King, and to guard against it.* I think, on the contrary, they had the highest Reason to fear *a real Resurrection* on this very Account, and to prevent a feigned one. They had been the chief Instruments in prosecuting him to Death, and excited the People to clamour him to the Cross, and the Nation had bound itself under a solemn Imprecation: *His Blood be on us and our Children.* If then his Resurrection was real, it would have been the most authentic Vindication of his

his Innocence, the fullest Demonstration of the Impiety of the Scribes and Pharisees, and given the whole Nation just Reason to fear the Effects of that dreadful Curse under which they had laid themselves. If he rose to a *Spiritual Kingdom*, this would have proved the Falseness of the Doctrine they had spread of a *temporal Messiah*, and been the strongest Reproach of their Insolence and Pride in their Conduct to the *Roman Government*, to whose Power they thought it beneath them to be subject, and to whose Officers they thought it unlawful to pay the Tribute demanded of them. So that in all Views, national and personal, they had Reason to fear a real Resurrection and Spiritual Kingdom; especially considering, that this must have put an End to the Influence of those *haughty Priests* and Pharisees, and reduced them from being *Teachers* of the People, to be *Learners* of *Christ's* Disciples; even of his Disciples whom they treated with Scorn and Insolence, and whose Master they had put to an infamous and accursed Death. And these personal and private Reasons, together with others of a more publick Nature, too obvious to be mentioned; made it as really their Interest to prevent also a feigned Resurrection, and the general Belief of it amongst the People. So that the Reality or Pretence of a raised Messiah and *Spiritual Kingdom*, must, in Proportion as either prevailed, have been fatal to the worldly Interests of the Scribes and Pharisees, who were therefore deeply concerned *thus far* to prevent the Belief and Acknowledgment of either, whether true or false.

II. 'Tis farther objected, that as Nicodemus *had wound an Hundred Pound Weight of Spices about the Body of Jesus, the Pharisees, upon looking into the Sepulchre, must have seen it spiced, pickled, and preserved; and that upon being Witnesses to this, they must have rested satisfied that the Disciples knew nothing of any*
Prophecy

Prophecy of his rising again, and therefore could have no Design, under that Pretence, to steal away his Body, and report that he was risen; and so must have taken the Soldiers back again with them, and not have exposed themselves to Ridicule, by needlessly sealing the Sepulchre, and setting their Watch. But Part of this Objection proceeds from the Ignorance only of those who make it; viz. the Assertion that *Christ's Body was pickled* and preserved. The Word *αρωματα*, *Spices*, by no means implies it; nor can it be inferred from the *μιγμα σμυρνης και αλοης*, the *Mixture of Myrrh and Aloes*; *μιγμα* properly expressing any Mixture, whether wet or dry. And that this was a dry Mixture there is a great deal of Reason to suppose. The pickling and preserving it was impossible. This was a *Work of Time*. The * *Egyptians*, besides the Time spent in preparing the Body, let it remain in the Pickle *seventy Days*. There was not probably an Hour for any thing that could be done to the Body of *Christ*, since every thing must be finished, and the Body buried before *Sun-set*; immediately after which the Sabbath begun, when they counted it unlawful to do any of these Things. In so small a Compass of Time, how could the Pickle be made, or what would it have signified, to have just put the Body into it, had it been made, and immediately to have taken it out again, and wrapped it up in its Funeral Linnens, † which was always done after the pickling was over? The Body was taken out of the Vessel in which it lay for this Purpose, and carried to the Grave only in its Linnens. A Representation of *Christ's* dead Body carried to its Grave, may be seen in *Chifflet's* Treatise

* Ταυτα δε ποιησαντες ταριχευσαι λιτρω κρυψαντες ημερας εβδομηκοντα. Herodot. l. 2. c. 86.

† Επειαν δε παρελθωσι αι εβδομηκοντα, λησαντες τον νεκρον, κατελισσεται και αυτε το σωμα σινδωνος βυσσωνος τελαμωσι κατατετμημενισι. Id. Ibid.

of Christ's Sepulchral Cloaths *. 'Tis therefore certain his Body was not *properly embalmed*, and therefore highly probable that the Myrrh and Aloes were a *dry Composition*, because the Straitness of the Time would not admit of any Thing farther. Unquestionably the Pharisees took Care that the Body was in the Sepulchre when they set the Guard, and might know that it was thus *wrapped in Spices*. But this is so far from being a Reason why they should *take back* the Guard, that probably they might suspect, that this *very Spicing* was intended by the Disciples more effectually to deceive them into such a Security, as was necessary to their more effectually carrying on their intended Design of a sham Resurrection. For did the Scribes and Pharisees imagine that the Spicing his Body could prevent a real Resurrection, if God was pleased to effect it? If this could not prevent a real one, in Bar of the Power of God, it could be no Hindrance to the pretending a false one, if the Disciples were wicked enough to assert it; because, whether real or false, the Power and Agency of God would, in both Cases, have been equally appeal'd to. And therefore *John's* Account of the spicing may be very true, and yet the Reason of placing the Watch be fairly accounted for.

But 'tis said, that *according to Matthew, Mark, and Luke, Mary Magdalen, and the other Mary, knew how and where the Body was laid, that therefore they certainly knew that the Body was thus laid in Spices. What Need therefore of their preparing Spices and Ointments to do what was already done?* But how doth it appear that these Women knew what *Joseph and Nicodemus* had done? None of the Historians say that they took either of the *Maries* with them, or acquainted them with the Quantity of

* De Lint. Sepulch. p. 47.

Spices that were bought, or that they intended to wrap up the dead Body in them, before they put it into the Sepulchre. Nor is it at all probable that Persons of their Condition or Character should do it; or that they would be willing that their doing *this kind Office* to the crucified Jesus should be publickly known. They did it *at Even*, and buried him *by Even*; and tho' the *Maries* knew *where* the Body was laid, it by no means follows that they knew any thing of the Spices it was wrapped in, since these were concealed by the Linens wrapt over them. The Sabbath-day was no Day for them to look into that Affair, and therefore we hear nothing of their coming to the Sepulchre after the Funeral, 'till early on the *Sunday*. Besides, had they known it, they might also know that those Spices were all *dry ones*, and that the Time would allow of no other, of no *anointing and embalming* the Body; and therefore, to supply this Defect, they might bring other Spices. And 'tis certain they did bring them, for they * *bought sweet Spices, that they might come and anoint him*; or, as Luke † tells us, *they prepared Spices and Ointments*. The Mixture of Myrrh and Aloes, brought by *Nicodemus*, might be quite of another Kind, for any thing that can be proved to the contrary, and *Matthew*, and the other Evangelists, still remain *very consistent* Historians.

But doth not this Account of *Spicing the Body*, prove that the Disciples knew nothing of the Prophecy of the Resurrection? and is it not absurd to suppose, that if the Disciples did not, the Pharisees should, as this placing the Guard evidently supposes? Unquestionably this spicing the Body proves, that there was *no Expectation* of its Resurrection by the Persons who did it. But how doth it follow from hence, that they *knew nothing* of the Prophecy about it? One

* Mar. xvi. i. † Luke xxiii. 56.

would think the Inference should be, that tho' they knew it, they *did not regard* or believe it. And therefore it may be equally true of the Scribes and Pharisees, that they knew the Prophecy of the Resurrection as well as the Disciples, but believed it as little. But as they had made it their Interest that there should be no Resurrection of *Christ* at all, and as it was unquestionably their Interest, that the Report of a pretended Resurrection should gain no Credit; therefore they demanded the Watch, because they did neither know nor expect a *real Resurrection*, and were willing to secure themselves against all Possibility of a *pretended one*.

'Tis objected farther: That this coming with the Spices, to anoint the Body, *shews there was no Watch; for they* (the Women) *appear under no Apprehension of any Hindrance or Molestation, consulting together as they went, Who shall roll us away the Stone from the Door of the Sepulchre? which they would not have said, if they had known it was sealed; nor would they have gone to anoint the Body, if they had known there had been a Watch set.* One would therefore think, that the fair and natural Consequence from hence should be, that they neither did know that the Watch was set, or that the Stone was sealed. And this I fancy was the real Case. But 'tis urged, *That if these Things had been done, how is it possible but they must have known it? So publick an Action, done about him, on whom all their Thoughts and Affections were at that Time employed, could not be private to them.* But whence doth it appear that the Action was so very publick as is presumed, and as could not be kept private from these Women? The Watch was not demanded 'till the next Day after the Crucifixion. 'Twas a Thing concerted only between the Priests, Pharisees, and *Pilate*. I no where read that the Priests and Pharisees took these Women with them to *Pilate*, or sent to ac-

quaint them with the Precaution they had taken. My Bible doth not tell me who the Persons were that sealed the Stone, nor what Witnesſes they took with them. I read nothing whether they placed the Seal, and ſet the Watch, in the Morning, Noon, or Evening of the Sabbath. I cannot tell whether they went privately or publickly. I muſt be reſolved in theſe Particulars, before I ſhall be brought to believe the Thing was *ſo extremely publick* as the Objection ſuppoſes. This I know, that the Women *reſted on the Sabbath-day, according to the Commandment **; and am therefore apt to imagine, that not ſuſpecting any thing of what the Scribes and Pharifees had been doing, they never went to acquaint themſelves with it; and that ſuch a Thing might be reſolved on in ſuch a City as *Jeruſalem*, without every Woman's knowing it in that City; and that the Guard might be actually ſet, and the Stone ſealed, in a Place at ſome Diſtance from that City, and yet ſome Women, who reſted on that Day, might be altogether ignorant of the Tranſaction. Nay, it is not an improbable Suppoſition, but that the crafty Scribes and Pharifees might not ſeal the Stone, nor ſet the Watch, 'till the very Evening of the Sabbath, or 'till after the Sabbath was ended. They would ſcarce have thought it lawful to do it before; and by deferring it 'till then, they might have done it with that *perfect Secrecy*, as would moſt effectually have detected any intended Fraud. For if the Diſciples had deſigned to ſteal away the Body, if they had known nothing of the Watch, they would have made the Attempt, and been diſcovered in the very Fact. There is therefore no Proof, that this was a *publick Act*, and the contrary is probable. For as the Women went without any Apprehenſion or Fear of the Watch, 'tis plain they knew nothing at all of it; and as they ſaid one to another: *Who ſhall roll us away the*

* *Luke xxiii. 56.*

Stone from the Door of the Sepulchre? 'tis as plain they knew as little of the Seal; and therefore they might go without Fear to anoint the Body; tho' the Seal was put on, and the Guard set, and a fraudulent Resurrection expected by those, who took this Precaution to prevent it. All therefore is plain and consistent, and our Evangelists quite free from the Charge of *telling different Stories*. *Matthew's* Account of the Watch is *perfectly reconcileable* with *Mark's* and *Luke's* and *John's*, about the Spices, and the Truth may be known from these united Historians, and the Consistency of their History is an Argument of its being genuine and faithful. And from the whole of this Account, I think we may fairly infer, that as the placing this Guard seems to have been a Thing quite unknown to the Friends and Disciples of *Christ*, they had no more an Intention to steal away the Body, in order the better to support a false Resurrection, than they had Disposition to believe a real one. For if this had been their Design, they would have attempted it, as they knew nothing of the Guard, and must have been surprized in it.

III. Another Objection is, that *they tell Pilate, that Jesus said, after three Days he would rise again, and yet they desire the Sepulchre may be made sure but 'till the third Day. Whereas they should have desired Leave to watch it 'till the fourth Day, or 'till the third was past, or by their own Confession they might watch in vain, for the Disciples might have stolen him away afterwards, and been in Time; unless, 'Till the third Day, Within, and After three Days, signify all one and the same Thing.* Such an Objection is but little to the Honour of them that make it. I have before shewn, that the Preposition *μετα*, *after*, is used by *Homer*, the 70th, *Philo*, *Josephus*, and many other Writers, to signify *within*, i. e. within a certain Time begun, but not wholly elapsed. I now

observe, that the Particle *εως* is used with an *inclusive Sense* of the Person, or Thing, or Time, to which it is applied, and should be frequently rendered, *'till after*. *Απο Αβρααμ εως Δαβιδ*, * *from Abraham to David*, *απο Δαβιδ εως της μετοικησιας*, *from David to the Captivity*, † *εως της σημερον ημερας*, *to this very Day*, all inclusive; *εως ‡ της τελευτης Ηρωδ*, *'Till after the Death of Herod*, *εως της ημερας ης ανεληφθη αφ ημων*, ** *'till after the Day he was taken up from us*; with many other Places of the New Testament that might be mention'd. || And thus in the Passage before us, *εως της τριτης ημερας* means, *'till the third Day* inclusive, or *'till after the third Day*.

IV. Another Absurdity pretended in the Account is, that *the Cause for watching the dead Body was*, least the Disciples should steal him away by Night, and say unto the People, he is risen again from the Dead. *What if they did, 'tis said, if they had no Proof for that Assertion? If the People could never see him afterwards, would they be such credulous Fools to believe them?* Those who laugh at the Account of *Christ's* Resurrection, as an Imposture, and groundless Fable, and believe that he did not rise again, and that none of the People ever saw him, should not ask such *impertinent Questions*. For the People did believe in him as risen from the Dead, and credited the Apostles Account of his Resurrection, and were *as credulous* as 'tis thought an Absur-

* *Mat. i. 17.*

† *Rom. xi. 8.*

‡ *Mat. ii. 15.*

** *Act. i. 22.*

|| Thus also in other Writers. *Εως αν εδοκιμασθησαν κατα της νομης*. *'Till after they had been legally approved*. *Lys. Orat. p. 297.* *Εως απαυτα τα εκεινη περιλαβεν*. *'Till after she had stript him of every Thing*. *Isai Orat. 7. p. 521.* *Επισχων αν εως οι πλειστοι των εισδοτων γραμμη απιφωσαντο*. *I would have waited 'till after those who usually speak had given their Opinion*. *Demost. Philip. 1. Init.* *Εως της Αλεξανδρου τελευτης*. *'Till after Alexander's Death*. *Diodor. Sic. l. 1. p. 5.*

dity even to suppose they would be; and the Belief of this Fact gains Ground to this Day, and I hope will do, in spite of all Attempts to ridicule and blaspheme it. The Reason therefore assign'd by the Scribes and Pharisees, *least they say to the People, He is risen again from the Dead*, was a just Reason for their Caution, as they foresaw the People were disposed to credit the Prophecy of *Christ*, and the Accomplishment of it, as testified by the Apostles. And the Event shewed that this Reason assigned by them was natural and good.

V. When 'tis urged: *It looks as if the Scribes and Pharisees believed at least, that the Disciples had been used to deceive the People, by their reporting false Miracles, and that the People had been carried away by such false Reports*; it appears to me to be quite mistaking the Case. It looks rather, as if the Scribes and Pharisees had their Suspicions and Fears that he really might rise according to his own Prediction, that they could not deny the Miracles he wrought in his Life, and that they knew the People were so fully apprised of them, as having been Witnesses to the Facts themselves, as that they were greatly disposed to credit the predicted Miracle of his Resurrection, if testified by his Apostles, and if they could produce any probable Attestation of their Testimony. The People, many of them, almost *adored him* when living, and confessed *the Hand and Power of God* in him. They solemnly acknowledged and proclaimed him *their Messiah* * at his Entrance into *Jerusalem*, so that *the whole City was moved*, and their Answer to the Enquiry, *Who is this?* was: *This is Jesus, that Prophet of Nazareth in Galilee*. And tho' by the Instigation of the Scribes and Pharisees, they afterwards *clamour'd him* to his Crucifixion, yet their subtle Leaders had great Reason to

* *Mat. xxi. 9, &c.*

believe the Remembrance of his Miracles would not soon be lost amongst them, and that there was a sufficient Foundation laid for their Belief of a real Resurrection, and for their being brought to credit a pretended one; and in either Case, had Reason to apprehend, that the Consequences would not be over favourable to themselves; and therefore, partly thro' the Hopes of what would not, and the Fears of what might happen to the People and themselves, they prudently demanded the Watch and the Seal *εως τριτης ημερας*, 'till after the third Day.

VI. But *why*, 'tis said, *all this Fear of the Disciples? who were fled, and hid themselves for Fear of the Jews.* Fled! Where? Only into some Place of Secrecy from their Persecutors, and the cruel Destroyers of their Master. But did these Persecutors know *where*? Who can tell but that the Scribes and Pharisees imagined, they might *lie hid on purpose*, to be ready at the proper Season, to carry on the intended Fraud of stealing away the Body; and that as they could have no possible Pretence to destroy them, they would be before hand with them, and prevent their accomplishing the Imposture they intended, if they intended one; and hinder their being Witnesses to his Resurrection, if it should prove a real one? This was the natural Dictate of *Policy* on one Hand, and of *implacable* and incurable *Malice* on the other.

VII. It hath been looked on as farther exceptionable in this Account, that *tho' this Story of the sealing and guarding the Sepulchre is of great Consequence, being written to prove that the Disciples did not steal the Body away by Night, and was a publick Action; yet 'tis received only on the Report of a single Testimony.* But what kind of Testimony should there have been? What, a *publick Testimony* of the *Jews*? Would they proclaim the Folly of their own Precaution,

tion, or the Shame of their Disappointment? Should it have been the Testimony of all the four Evangelists? But if the Thing itself *be absurd*, as the above Objections suppose, the Testimony of four would render it no more probable than that of one. If the Thing be credible in its Nature, the Testimony of one *competent Witness* to the Fact is of itself sufficient. But suppose I can produce the Testimony of the four Evangelists, or some *very corroborating* Circumstances from them, will this be allowed satisfactory? There is *one remarkable Circumstance* attested by all of them, which makes the whole Account of *Matthew* probable; and that is *the Stone that was placed at the Door of the Sepulchre*. So that there was a Stone to seal, by the Acknowledgment of every one of them. Happy for us that this Particular is recorded, otherwise we should have had *the Stone produced in Judgment* against us, and brought in Evidence to confront *Matthew's* Testimony. There is also another Circumstance that confirms this Account, and that is, that the Report of the Soldiers, *that the Disciples came by Night and stole away the Body*, was the common Pretence of the *Jews*, and kept up amongst them a long while after our blessed Saviour's Death and Resurrection. And this *Matthew* asserts publicly, by affirming: *This Saying is noised amongst the Jews to this Day*; viz. at that very Time when his Gospel was finished and published; an abundant Evidence, that he knew this was *so notorious* a Fact, as that the *Jews* themselves could not deny it; and a sufficient Proof of the Writer's Integrity and Veracity in asserting it. This was so well known to be the Report spread by the *Jews*, that * *Justin Martyr*, in his Dialogue with

* Μαθόντες αὐτὸν ἀναστάντα ἐκ νεκρῶν — ἀνδρὰς χειροτονησάντας ἐκλεκτοὺς εἰς πᾶσαν τὴν οἰκουμενὴν ἐπεμψέτε, κηρύσσοντας, ὅτι — οἱ μαθηταὶ αὐτοῦ κλεψάντες αὐτὸν ἀπὸ τοῦ μνηματός νυκτός, ὅπου ἐν κατετάδῃ ἀφῆ-

Trypho the Jew, charges them with choosing and sending Men all over the World to propagate this Calumny every where, to hinder the Success of Christianity. Nor have the modern Jews themselves been ashamed to insinuate the same Thing, that the Disciples intended to steal away the dead Body. Thus the Book intituled, * *Toldos Jeshu*, or, *The History of Jesus*, relates, “ that the Disciples, “ the Night after the Crucifixion, in the Middle of “ it, got round the Sepulchre, making great Lamentations; and that *Judas*, who betray’d him, “ took away the Body, and hid it in his Garden, “ under a Brook of Water, that they might not find “ it. And that the next Day, when the Apostles “ could not find the Body, they immediately cried “ out, that he was risen, and ascended. And that “ when *Judas* afterwards discovered the dead Body “ to the Jews, he gave this Reason for hiding it, “ that he was afraid his Disciples would have stolen “ it away.” ’Tis also an Addition to the Probability of the Fact, that the Time when the Women came, which all the Evangelists agree in, and found the Body gone, exactly answers to the Time of the Earthquake, and angelical Appearance to the Soldiers, and their Report that his Body was stolen in the Night; *early in the Morning on the first Day of the Week*. All of them also mention the Appearance of Angels to the Women, all allow the Stone to be rolled away, and the Body gone; Circumstances that coincide with *Matthew’s* Account, and confirm it.

I add, that the very Report that was spread by the Soldiers, at the Instigation of the Priests and Pharisees, that *the Disciples stole away his Body by*

λαδις απο τῆ σαρφς, πλαινσι τῆς ανθρωπης, λεγοντες εγεγερθαι αυτον εκ νεκρων, κ’ εις θρανον ανεληλυθεναι. *Dial. cum Tryph. p. 2. pag. 368. Edit. Thirl.*

* *Told. Jeshu. p. 19. ad fin. Wagenfel. Tel. ign. Sat. V. 2.*

Night,

Night, was the only probable one they could raise on such an extraordinary Occasion. That the Body was in Fact gone early on the Morn, they could want no possible Evidence; for 'twas in their own Power to have the fullest Demonstration of it. Now had the Disciples intended a Fraud, and to impose on the World by the Report of a false Resurrection, *the stealing away the Body* was essentially necessary to support the Foundation of such an Attempt. Had it remain'd in the Sepulchre, the Lye would have been confronted by an irresistible Proof. Had it been removed by the Enemies of *Christ*, they would have had it in their Power to *crush the Report* upon its first Rise, by exposing the dead Body to publick View. The Disciples therefore must have it in their Custody, to render such a Falsehood, had they had a Mind to raise it, in the least credible. Now doth not every one see, that what was thus absolutely necessary to give Credit to the Belief of a false Resurrection, was the very Circumstance that was necessary to spoil the Credit of a real Resurrection? Here was the Testimony of the Scribes and Pharisees, Men of Influence and Power, Men of *pretended Sanctity*, to balance the Testimony of the Apostles, Men of no Authority and Interest in the Nation. The Body was gone by the Confession of all. The Pretence of the Apostles stealing it *was plausible*, and indeed they must have had it upon any other Supposition, but that of a real and certain Resurrection; and therefore that the Scribes and Pharisees should put this Story into the Mouths of the Guards is *the most rational Supposition*, because 'twas the *only plausible Lye* they could invent to discredit the Belief of *Christ's* being truly risen from the Dead. These Things put together, corroborate the Testimony of *Matthew*, as to the whole Account, which is so far from being *a Story independent of the main History*, that it hath a strong Connection with

it; and to talk of *Interpolations, Fraud in the Fact, and Forgery in the Relation*, is the mean and idle Pretence of Men at a Loss for Argument, and who are determined to make any Suppositions, and to invent the most trifling Stories, rather than to account for Things like Men of Learning, Sense, and Integrity, and believe Facts which they know they can never disprove the Reality of.

C H A P. V.

*The Appearance of the Angel to the Soldiers,
before the Resurrection of Christ.*

WE have seen, in the foregoing Chapter, the Precaution taken by the Priests and Pharisees, to secure themselves against the Prediction of *Christ's Resurrection*. But both their Malice and their Wisdom *proved ineffectual*, and served only the more effectually to establish and confirm this important Truth of Christianity. He arose according to his own Assurance, of which *Matthew* gives the following Account.

In the End of the Sabbath, as it began to dawn towards the first Day of the Week, came Mary Magdalen, and the other Mary, to see the Sepulchre. And behold there was a great Earthquake; for the Angel of the Lord descended from Heaven, and came and rolled back the Stone from the Door, and sat upon it. His Countenance was like Lightning, and his Rayment white as Snow. And for Fear of him the Keepers did shake, and became as dead Men. But behold some of the Watch came into the City, and shewed unto the Chief Priests all the Things that were done. And when they were assembled with the Elders, and had taken
Counsel,

Counsel, they gave large Money to the Soldiers, saying: Say ye, his Disciples came by Night, and stole him away whilst we slept. And if this come to the Governor's Ears, we will persuade him, and secure you. So they took the Money, and did as they were taught. And this Saying is commonly reported untill this Day. So that the first Appearance on this extraordinary Occasion, was that of

The Angel to the Soldiers, who guarded the Sepulchre.

The Terror of the Soldiers, their deserting their Post of Duty, their sudden Flight into the City, their immediate Application to the Chief Priests, and the gathering the Council in Consequence of it, all demonstrate something extraordinary had happened; tho' there is no Intimation that the Soldiers saw *Christ*; nor will *the Apparatus* appear too solemn for the great Event it was to introduce. But

I. To invalide this Account, and render it improbable, 'tis objected; *That it is not at all likely that the Jewish Rulers should so easily and foolishly think to conceal the Resurrection, by hiring the Watchmen to report a Lye, and so shameful a Lye; yea, to report the very Thing they were placed there to prevent; and that 'tis as improbable that the Watchmen should confess their sleeping at the Sepulchre, and thereby acknowledge their own Negligence and Guilt.* But what should hinder these Priests and Pharisees from hiring the Soldiers to report this *foolish Lye*, if they had no Lye more probable to put into their Mouths, or if this was the only Way by which they could account for the Removal of the Body? I have never yet heard of *a more artful Lye* invented for them, and believe *the most dextrous Proficients* in this Science will be hard put to it to tell one that was more likely to be credited. There was, in my Opinion, only this

Choice left them, either *honestly to acknowledge* the Resurrection, and charge the Soldiers to tell what they had seen; or else to act just as they did, to bribe the Guard to conceal the Truth, and propagate the Lye of the Disciples stealing away the Body whilst they slept. And tho' this was owning their Fault, yet they had nothing to fear from it, since they were assured: *If this come to the Governor's Ears, we will perswade him, and secure you.*

The Lye that some Persons would have put into the Soldiers Mouths, that the Disciples came by *Night with Clubs and Swords, and drove away the Watch, and then seized on and carried off the Body of Christ by Violence*, shews rather an *Inclination* to, than any great *Dexterity* in lying, and is a *more stupid Lye* than the other, and would have found no one to credit it; for the Soldiers would have been naturally asked by every one: Where are the Wounds and Bruises to prove Force in them, or Resistance in you? Besides, the Disciples were fled and hid themselves for fear of the *Jews*, out of a just Apprehension, that they might, if taken, be sacrificed with their Master; and 'twould have been too *ridiculous a Lye* to have reported, that they ventured to dispute with a Band of *regular Soldiers*, and in spite of them were able to carry off the Body they were set to guard.

But it hath been said, *that the Watch were few in Number*, and therefore *such a Rescue* was more probable. But 'twill be Time enough to answer this, when we are told, *how many* they were, and how the exact Number came to be known. I suppose that they who set them imagined they were a sufficient Match for the Disciples, because the Watch was asked, *ασφαλισθηναι τον ταφον*, *to secure the Sepulchre*, to prevent the Disciples stealing away the Body. But supposing the Soldiers had reported, that the Disciples came and drove them away, how

I

would

would this have much mended the Matter, if they had not, some how or other, accounted for the Removal of the Body? And if they had been asked about it, what other Answer could they have given, but that the Disciples *stole it away*? But how did they know this? Did they see them take it? No. The Disciples drove them away first, before they themselves touched it. How then were they sure they stole it? Why, *they supposed so*. Very good. This they did report, *the Disciples came by Night, whilst we were asleep, and stole away the Body*, i. e. we suppose they did so. This would have been, in both Instances, just the same kind of Account, and if either of them be bad, 'tis impossible that the other can be good; and the same Arguments that destroy the Probability of the one, will equally affect the Credibility of the other. It is in either Case putting the Fact on a *mere Supposition*, and making them in Reality say, they *knew nothing of the Matter*. There is only this Difference, that no Body would have, in all Probability, believed, that the Disciples were able to drive away a Band of *armed Roman Soldiers*, whom the Rulers thought sufficient to guard the Body. But that the Guard might be *asleep* when they should have been *watching*, especially on an Occasion where they had little Reason to fear Opposition, was a Thing more likely, and as such, actually obtained Credit. But farther.

II. 'Tis represented as an *exceeding improbable Thing*, that the Soldiers should be prevailed on to tell such an impudent Lye, and take Bribes in order to do it; and said in their Behalf, *that if they saw the dreadful Appearance of Angels, they must have been afraid to have spread such a false Report*. But this is urged with a very ill Grace by those, who represent the Apostles as *mere Impostors*, and spreading the Account of Christ's Resurrection, if they knew it to be a Falsehood, even *without the Inducement* of any

any Bribe to publish it; and even publishing it solemnly in the Name of God, and by a pretended Commission and Authority from him, to whom they professed themselves accountable, and by whose Sentence they expected to be determined for a State of everlasting Life or Death. But in Reality, how is it improbable that Soldiers should do this? Was it never heard of before, that common Soldiers would take a Bribe, or swear to a Lye? Did this *Roman Guard* raise the Lye of themselves? Was it not put in their Mouths by some of the Priests and Pharisees? And might not this help to remove the Scruples of the Soldiers, especially when added to the *all-commanding Influence* of Silver and Gold? Might not the Priests tell them, all they saw was *mere Illusion*? Might they not think it right to follow the Judgment of these *reverend and learned Gentlemen*, and if they had not actually seen *Christ* alive, begin to think, and at last believe, that his Disciples had stolen him? And that this really was the only Way, by which the *Non-Appearance* of the Body could be accounted for? As to *Conscience*, and the Apprehension of *divine Vengeance*, these Soldiers had, I imagine, as much Regard to these as common Soldiers ordinarily have; who are mostly drawn from the lowest Classes, and very Refuse of the People, even such as are the most profligate and vile. Nor is it at all to be wondered at, that they should lose the Impressions of their Terror from the Earthquake, and Angelical Appearance, so very soon; or that when they found themselves *out of Danger*, they should be *out of their Pannick*, and that when they saw nothing they should be afraid of nothing; especially when dextrously managed by the subtle Priests, who knew well enough how to dispel their Fears, and had Arguments to supply them with, which they had Reason to believe would be more efficacious than their strongest Convictions.

III. It hath been also farther objected against this Account of *Matthew*, that 'tis scarce probable that even the Priests themselves could be so extremely profligate, as to put such a Lye as this into the Soldiers Mouths, and thus set God at absolute Defiance; and that 'tis rather reasonable to think, that as the Priests were credulous of Miracles, being nursed up in the Belief of them, the Attestation of the Soldiers to the miraculous Events that happened at the Sepulchre must have prevented them from doing what *Matthew* relates they did; and that at least they would have silently and cautiously waited the Event, lest they should be found guilty of fighting against God. I will not enter into a particular Account of the Character of the Priests and Pharisees in the Time of *Christ*. That stands upon an open and authentick Record. I shall only add, that supposing they put into the Soldiers Mouths a Report, which they knew and were convinced was a Lye, there is nothing in their Character to render such a Supposition incredible. For they who had Malice and Wickedness enough to put *Christ* to Death, tho' they had not one single Crime they could prove against him, would not scruple a Lye, if they found it necessary to prevent the Belief of his Resurrection to Life. For as they put him to Death, because he declared himself *the Messiah*, but was not a Messiah according to their Minds; so the same Reason would lead them to deny his Resurrection, in spite of the strongest Proofs of it; especially as they knew that the same Lye, which would discredit his Resurrection, would, in Proportion, help to conceal the Infamy and Guilt of that execrable Murther they had just committed.

But I see no Necessity to suppose that they hired the Soldiers to report, what they themselves were, in all Circumstances, convinced was a Lye; but what they were partly inclined to believe and hope was the Truth of the Case. They did not believe the Resurrection

furrection to be real. The Body was gone. They knew they had it not themselves. Where therefore could it be, but in the Possession of his Friends? And how could they have come at it, but by Fraud, and the Negligence of those who were set to guard it? For any thing that I can tell, they might thus reason with themselves.

Had it entered into their Heads, that he was taken down from the Cross *before he was dead*, revived in the Sepulchre, and, some how or other, escaped out of it, this must have exceedingly terrified them; because then he might have been the Messiah upon their own Principle of *the Messiah's abiding for ever*; and such a wonderful Escape from Death might reasonably have been looked on as *an evident Interposition* of God in his Favour. The Consequence of this must have been, their being *Murderers in Intention*, and Fact, as far as they could carry their Malice, and the Fears of a divine Vengeance for such an Instance of great Wickedness and Cruelty. This would also have taught them how to have accounted for the *Angelical Appearances*; which, upon their own Principles, they would not have thought *improperly employ'd* upon so great an Occasion, as the Deliverance of the Messiah from the Imprisonment of the Grave. This therefore was a Report that nothing could induce them to put into the Mouths of the Watch; besides that it could have gained no Credit; since Friends and Enemies were *fully satisfied* of his Death, and the numerous Spectators that attended his Crucifixion, were all of them Witnesses to the Reality of it. So that however ridiculous this Report, that *the Disciples stole away his Body*, may appear, and how false soever it was in Fact, it seems to have been the only Refuge his Enemies had left, to account for the Removal of the Body from the Sepulchre.

As

As to the Attestation of the Watch, concerning the Earthquake, and the Appearance of Angels, *credulous* as the Priests might be of *Miracles*, there is no Reason to think that their Credulity would lead them to an easy Belief of these. If some of the Priests were Sadducees, then they could not believe the Miracles reported by the Soldiers, nor the Resurrection of *Jesus*, upon the Principles of their Party; for * *the Sadducees say that there is no Resurrection, neither Angel, nor Spirit. But the Pharisees confess both.* Allowed. But they had put *Jesus* to Death, and did not much care to be *convicted of the Murder*, nor to have their own Shame, their Malice, Cruelty, Guilt, and bitter Disappointment published to the World. Besides, was the Testimony of a Band of frightened Soldiers sufficient to convince them? Of what? It doth not appear that the Soldiers knew any thing at all of *Christ's* Resurrection, or that they saw him, or reported that they saw him, to the Priests and Pharisees, who therefore could not receive any sufficient Conviction of it from their Account. 'Tis true, the Circumstances of the Earthquake, the Angelick Appearances, and the rolling away the Stone, of which the Soldiers informed them, greatly alarmed them, and made them fear what might be the Consequences. But still *the principal Fact*, that of the Resurrection, was not yet proved to them; the Soldiers Report they might *somewhat question* the Truth of; and if they could, as they actually did, resist the greater Evidence of Miracles they had seen themselves, there is abundant Reason to conclude, that they were much more capable of discrediting Miracles, only reported by such *scandalous Evidence* as these *Roman* Soldiers, whom they saw immediately ready to deny the Truth of them; and of resisting their Evidence, had it been more satisfactory than it was,

* *Act.* xxiii. 8.

without any thing inconsistent with their known Character, and contrary to the common Tendency and Effects of the corrupt Passions and Affections of Mankind.

But is it not reasonable to suppose, that these Priests and Pharisees should *have paid so much Regard to the Report of the Soldiers, as that at least they would have silently and cautiously waited the Event, lest they should be found guilty of fighting against God?* Put the Question in other Words, and 'twill, I think, fully answer itself. Is it reasonable to suppose, that the very Men, who had just before murdered *Christ*, for this very Reason only, because he took on him the Character of the Messiah, would sit still, and suffer the Watch to report all over *Jerusalem*, that they felt an Earthquake at the Sepulchre of *Christ*, and saw an Angel in a most glorious Appearance descend from Heaven, and roll away the Stone, and *silently wait the Event* of such a Report? That they would thus *quietly permit* them to spread *uncontradicted* these Facts, so much to the Honour of him they had crucified, and that must have raised a Suspicion in the Minds of all that heard them, that he had been *unjustly crucified*, and that they themselves, who had had the main Hand in his Death, had been actually *fighting against God*, and involved the whole Nation in the Guilt, and brought them under the most dreadful Imprecation and Curse? Is it reasonable to think they would have waited the Event, and thus suffered all the People to be *prepared for* and prepossessed in Favour of his Resurrection, and the Belief of it, as soon as it should be properly and authentickly attested? I leave every sensible Man to determine in this Case, and am not in Pain for the Judgment he passes on it.

The real Character of the Priests and Pharisees of that Age leaves no Ground for believing, that they

they had such a *Tendernefs of Conscience*, such a Regard for God, and such a Disposition to Silence, and Caution not to offend him, as the Objection supposes. *Caiaphas* the High Priest was a very *cautious Man*, and a subtle Politician, and told the Council of Priests and Pharisees, when debating about the Miracles of *Jefus*, and what they should do, since they could not deny them: * *Ye perceive nothing at all, nor yet do you confider, that it is expedient for us, that one Man die for the People, and that the whole Nation perish not.* The Objection supposes, they should have silently and cautiously waited the Event, lest they should have been found guilty of fighting against God. Not so the Priest and Statesman *Caiaphas*. He had his Caution, but 'twas of another Kind, and of a quicker, warmer Operation. 'Tis better that one Man, whether he did Miracles or not, whether guilty or innocent, whether *Messiah* or *Impostor*, whether it were fighting against God or no; yet still 'twas better that one should die for the People, and at all Events be cut off, rather than the whole Nation perish. And with *Caiaphas* their Chief all the Priests and Pharisees of the Council agreed; for from that Day forth, they consulted together to put him to Death. Now what Reason is there to imagine, that these Men, who thus agreed to sacrifice *Jefus*, merely from Principles of a wicked Policy, contrary to all the Dictates of natural Conscience and Equity, and their very Conviction of the Truth of his Miracles, should, in a few Days or Weeks, grow so very cautious and scrupulous of offending God? Or that they, who thus *deliberately contrived*, and without any Caution, resolved on the Murder of an innocent Person, should hesitate one Moment on the spreading of a Lye, to conceal the Truth of his Resurrection; which, as far as believed, must have

* *John* xi. 49, 50.

pointed them out as Murtherers and *impious Fighters* against God? Every known Circumstance of their Character is against them, and confirms the Testimony of *Matthew*, in this remarkable Part of his History, beyond all Contradiction.

IV. But 'tis farther objected, that *whereas in Matthew's Account, the Soldiers are said to be frightned at the Appearance and Brightness of the Angel; there is, in Reality, little Reason to believe there was any such Appearance at all; that 'tis upon the Credit of the Women merely that 'tis believed Angels were concerned, and that they were very improperly employed on this Occasion, if actually present.* To this it may be answered, that the Assertion itself is not true, that *'tis upon the Credit of the Women merely, that 'tis believed Angels were concerned; tho', taking in all other concurring Circumstances, even the Credit of their Testimony would not be easily subverted.* But the Report of the Angelick Appearance to the Watch, was not so much as mentioned by the Women, who came not to the Sepulchre 'till they were fled; but is founded on the Credit of *Matthew's* Testimony, and the *natural Credibility* and Propriety of the Thing itself. He tells us of the Earthquake, the Descent of the Angel, the Glory of his Appearance, his rolling back the Stone and sitting on it, the Terror of the Soldiers, their Flight from the Sepulchre, their hastning into the City, and shewing unto the Chief Priests all the Things that were done, and that this Angel was he that appeared also to the Women, and assured them that *Christ was risen.* If I am asked, how *Matthew* came to know what the Soldiers saw and reported to the Priests, the Answer is not difficult. *Matthew* tells us *, that *some of the Watch came and told the Priests* what they had seen. Others of them therefore, who had not been

* *Matt.* xxviii. 11.

with the Priests, nor received any *Bribe of Secrecy*, unquestionably told *the real Truth*, to vindicate their hasty Retreat from the Monument; and the Evangelist might have his Account from them. Probably some of the Soldiers who *were bribed* might betray those who hired them to report a Lye. Perhaps some of the Council, who met together on the Event, abhorring the scandalous Conduct of the rest, might occasionally tell the real Truth. *Joseph of Arimathea*, who was a Friend of *Jesus*, and an *honourable Counsellor*, might be one of the Assembly. The *Clerks of the Council*, who took the Depositions of the Soldiers, or other Servants attending it, might discover what they told. Indeed, the Fact itself was of so surprising a Nature, the Characters of the Persons acquainted with it so different, and their Number so large, as that 'twas *morally impossible* it could be concealed, or hindred from becoming the *common Topick* of Conversation in *Jerusalem*.

But 'tis asked, *What had an Angel at all to do here?* Supposing I should freely own, I don't know, will it therefore follow, that he had no Business of Importance? Is there any thing regardable in such kind of Questions, but *the Impertinence* of them? 'Tis urged, that *their Appearance was improper, because they frighten'd away the Watch, who, had they seen Jesus, might have been proper and credible Witnesses of the Resurrection*. I suppose therefore, according to this Objection, the Angels should have stript themselves of their Habit of Glory, and addressed themselves in *Humble Guise* to this Watch: *By your Leave, Gentlemen*, we must roll away this Stone, and we'll immediately bring out *Jesus* for your Examination. I apprehend the Angels *better understood* their Commission and Business, and might possibly imagine that the Resurrection of their Lord little needed the Testimony of such Witnesses. However, they who assert that the Soldiers were frightened

frightned away *without seeing* Jesus, ought also to prove it. The sacred History says no such Thing, and no less Evidence can determine the Question. Supposing *they did see him*, they were then unquestionably Witnesses of it to the Council; and that was the Evidence insisted on. Supposing *they did not see him*, can it be proved that 'twas fit they should, and that they would have been *proper Evidence* if they had? If they saw the Angels, and yet denied it for Money, what would their seeing *Christ* have signified, if Money would have bribed them to have denied that also? Had they seen *Christ*, and been *the only* or *principal* Witnesses of his Resurrection, I doubt not but their Testimony would have been very warmly excepted against, as the most improper and unsatisfactory that could be, and we should have had *Riot run* upon their *bad Employment*, their *vile Character*, their Readiness to Murders, Thefts, Lying, and other Crimes. Nay, I doubt not, but that the Apostles themselves would have been charged with *hiring them* into their Party, and bribing them to spread the Report of their Master's Resurrection. Besides, however important this Fact is in the Christian Scheme, yet 'tis but *one Part* of that Scheme, and the Testimony *to this only* would have been of little Consequence in itself, or Benefit to the World. The Witnesses of *Christ* were to report and preach *his living Miracles*, his Doctrines, his Precepts, and the whole of his Religion, as well as the Miracle of his Resurrection from the Dead. This the Soldiers could not do, as they had never been Companions with and Attendants on him, and the reporting his Resurrection without this, might have made some wonder, but could have answered no one valuable End, gained very few Converts to believe even the Fact, and none to the Interests of true Religion and Virtue. Nor would their Character have supported their Testimony,

had they given it. And indeed the Thing itself, that the Soldiers were *the most proper Witnesses* of the Resurrection, is so extremely absurd, on many Accounts, that I can scarce persuade myself, that even they who assert it really believe it; and I can look on it in no other View, than as an hasty *sudden Start*, excited by the Warmth of *mechanical Infidelity* and Enthusiasm, only to shew their *soverain Contempt* of the Apostles, and their Testimony.

But 'tis said, that Christ *had no * Need of the Angel's Help, and could have risen as well without them, and rolled away the Stone without their Assistance.* But this should be proved as well as asserted. We Christians, how credulous soever we may be in believing, will allow nothing that makes against our Principles, unless it can be fairly made out. I am not sure, that their Attendance *was not necessary* on this important Event, and that God did not, some how or other, make use of their Ministry in effecting it. I am not yet indeed grown *so exceeding wise* as to say, that God can do nothing that I can't immediately account for the Reasons of; or to censure this or the other Thing *as unnecessary* or improper, because I am not informed *why* 'twas permitted or effected. I leave this to *the great Philosophers*, and Masters of Natural Reason, and am quite content to rank myself *in a much lower Class.*

But granting, that *Jesus* was able to have risen as well without them, why might not God, without a Censure, be allowed, if he pleased, to send his Angels to *do the greater Honour* to the Resurrection, to be the *first Messengers* of it, and by their Presence and Testimony to confirm the Truth of it? Is the Resurrection ever the less credible, because

* *Celsus* ridicules this Appearance of the Angel, and his rolling away the Stone of the Sepulchre. Ο γαρ τε θεσ παις, ως εοικεν, εκ εδυνατο ανοιξαι τον ταφον, αλλ' εδεηθη αλλης αποκνησεντος της πετρας. Orig cont. Cels. l. 5. p. 617.

an Angel of God was known to be present at it? Possibly they attended as Guards, *for the Preservation* and Security of his Person, when risen. Can any one assure me, that had *Jesus* come out of his Sepulchre *alone*, and without any Attendance, the Guards would not immediately *have seized* on him, and offered *fresh Indignity* and Violence to his Person; and that they had not received full and *punctual Instructions* from the Priests and Pharisees for this Purpose? And where is the Absurdity of supposing, that the Angels were commissioned to prevent this Insult, and drove them from the Grave, that they might not attempt it? But *he could have prevented this without their Assistance*. Suppose it. But why might he not use their Ministry, if he thought proper, especially if he farther thought that their Testimony to his Resurrection would be *a more honourable Confirmation* of it, than that of the Watch; who tho' they *asserted it* one Hour, he knew, for a Bribe, would *contradict it* the next? But how is it certain that *he could have prevented* the Attempt of such an Insult, without a Guard of Angels, if he appeared *as himself*, and so as was necessary to make the Guards Witnesses of his Resurrection? Had he, upon coming out of his Grave, *slipped out of the Hands* of the Guard as a Shadow or Spirit, the Guard would have reported, that they had seen an *Apparition*, but not *the real Jesus*; and could have been really no Evidence of his being risen again. Had he *terrified them* by any *glorious Appearance* of his own, this would have been a *Concealment* of his Person, and would have made them suspect they had seen an *Angel*, rather than *Christ*. Had he then appeared *wholly his usual Self*, and in his *proper Person*, he must have fallen into the Hands of the Guards who were set to watch him; and what must have been the Consequence of that in *the natural Course of Things*, is not difficult to foresee.

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Had they *abstained from Violence* to his Person, which is at least a very great Uncertainty, they must have led him as a *Captive* to those who placed them; the Consequence of which would probably have been *the repeating* the same Scene of Cruelty, under Pretence that *his first Sentence* had been imperfectly executed; and *Caiphas* his Politicks would soon have determined them to give him up to a *second Death*, rather than that the *Romans* should, for their espousing his Cause, deprive them of their Religion, and the small Remains of Power and Liberty they were possessed of.

And as this Appearance of the Angels prevented the Watch from offering any Insults to *Christ*, which their *own Brutality*, or *the Instructions* of the Priests, might lead them to; so it was, in Truth, *the most certain Vindication* of the Apostles, from having any Hand in the Removal of the Body. That the Soldiers fled in Terror from their Posts was notorious. Whence this Fear that possess'd them? Who drove them from their Stations? 'Twas not pretended, the Disciples came *by Violence*, and the Pretence would have been ridiculous, had it been made. The Soldiers themselves reported no such Thing, when they first came to the Priests; but honestly told them, they saw a very glorious Appearance, which rolled away the Stone, and rendered them unable to *keep the Post* assign'd them. Answerably to this Report, the Body was immediately missing; which, with the Flight, the Terror, the Report of the Soldiers, all demonstrated something extraordinary, and put the Enemies and Crucifiers of *Christ* into the greatest possible Amazement and Fright. And 'tis with no small Pleasure that *I see the Distress* of our modern Unbelievers in this very Article. *This Removal of the Body*, in spite of the Guards and Watch, *quite crucifies* them, and is so unaccountable a Thing, as that they are reduced to the poor and

low Shift of denying that there was any Guard at all, and cry out, *Interpolation, Forgery, Imposition*, and the like: They *know not* whether Christ *was dead*, and so removed by his Disciples; or whether he *was alive*, and waked out of his Swoon of his own Accord; whether there was a Stone, or how it was removed. *Hit or Miss*, they, in their Turn, suppose *any Thing, every Thing*, ask a few *smart Questions*, and then think they have done all that is necessary to *secure their Retreat*, and confound their Adversaries.

But doth not the Angels *appearing as Men make the Matter look like Fraud*, and give Room for *Suspicion*, that the Stone was rolled away, not by Angels, but by Men? I answer, it is not probable that the Angel did appear to the Watch *as a common Man*. Yea, the contrary is certain from the History, which says, *his Countenance was like Lightning, and his Rayment white as Snow*. The Watch, 'tis plain, had no Suspicion of any Deceit, and 'tis scarce possible that one or two Men could *so disfigure* themselves, by any Alteration of Dress they could invent, as to frighten a Band of Soldiers from their Posts, and the very Attempt thus to frighten them, would have been such *an idle Undertaking*, as must have ended in their Confusion, and probably their Destruction. And when the Angels had thus prepared every Thing for the Resurrection of *Jesus*, seen him risen, and delivered from his Sepulchre, and borne Witness to the Truth of it, to those of his Disciples that were present at his Tomb; their Attendance was no longer necessary; and such Questions as, *Why did the Angels depart at the Approach of Day-light, &c.* appear to me much *too contemptible* to deserve or need any particular Answer. Upon the whole, to sum up this Argument, let it be considered:

I. That

I. That *the laying the Body of Jesus in the Grave with Spices, as the Manner of the Jews was to bury,* is an abundant Demonstration, that they who thus *prepared those Spices,* had no great Notion or Expectation of his Resurrection; and that tho' *Jesus frequently foretold* his Disciples, that he must die, and rise again on the third Day, yet 'tis accountable for on the most certain Principles, why they * *should not understand him,* i. e. so understand what he said as to know how, consistent with their Principles, either the one or the other could possibly be; because as they believed and plainly acknowledged *Christ* to be the Messiah, the Notion of his Death was absolutely inconsistent with the Opinion of his being never to die, or that *he must abide forever.* And as *Christ* had not particularly informed them of the proper Office and Character of the Messiah, nor removed their Prejudices, that he was to be a *temporal Prince* and Saviour, the Consequence must have been, either that they must have renounced him as the Messiah, or not understood or believed how he could die. But as the Miracles he wrought abundantly convinced them that he was that Messiah, it could not be otherwise, whilst their Misapprehensions continued, but that they must be at a Loss how to explain and reconcile the Prophecy of his Death. And as when they saw him actually crucified and dead, they, in Consequence, gave up almost all their Hopes in him, as their Messiah, 'twas impossible, for this Reason, that they could expect his Resurrection, or better understand the Predictions relating to it, than they had done before; because as they never expected the Messiah to rise, much less could they expect the Resurrection

* Εἰ δὲ καὶ ἀτιμῶς ὥς τας ταυρωθῆναι τὸν Χριστὸν, ἀποτίθεται — Ἡμεῖς γὰρ ὅδ' εἰς ἐννοίαν τῶν εἰρη δυνάμεθα. Jusin. M. Dial. cum Tryph. Par. 2. Pag. 334, 335.

of *Christ*, whom, as dead, they no longer looked on, and acknowledged under that Character.

II. That as it doth not appear, that the Women who first came to the Sepulchre, knew that the dead Body of *Jesus* was laid in Spices, 'twas no Wonder they should go two Days after to do that, which *they did not know* was done before; or that they should go two Days after to *do that carefully* and effectually, which if they knew done, yet they had Reason to believe was not, thro' the Straitness of the Time, *done in a Manner worthy* the dead Body of one, who had been so great and extraordinary a Person. And as they went to *anoint* his Body without any Apprehension of being prevented and hindered in it, 'tis plain the Guard was set *without any publick Notice* of it, and greatly probable that 'twas *privately set*, that any intended Fraud might be more effectually prevented and discovered.

III. That there is no Reason to believe that the Priests and Pharisees *really believed* his Resurrection, any more than his own Disciples; because they laboured under *the same national Prejudices* of the temporal Kingdom of the Messiah that the Disciples did, and had made it their Interest that he should not rise again, as having had the principal Hand in destroying him. But as they knew there was a Report spread of him, that he had said he would *rise again the third Day* after his Death; their not believing that such a Prediction could ever be accomplished, was the most substantial Reason for their demanding a Guard, and setting a Watch at the Sepulchre, to prevent a fraudulent Resurrection being imposed on them, and the Stealth of the dead Body by his Disciples; which was absolutely necessary to raise, and propagate, and give Credit to the Report of a real Resurrection.

IV. That if the Priests and Pharisees had any Fears and Suspicions that he might possibly rise again;

gain; yet as 'tis no uncommon Thing for bad Men to conceal one Crime by the Commission of another; 'tis not at all improbable, that they who had been the inveterate Enemies of *Christ* all his Life, and had brought him, by their Malice, to the Cross, should have this farther View in the Precaution they took to secure his Sepulchre, *viz.* not only to prevent their being deceived by a pretended Resurrection, but to have it in their Power to *blast the Credit*, and destroy the Belief of a really true one.

V. That tho' the Soldiers reported what they had seen and felt, and the Fright they had been put into at the Sepulchre, yet that there is no Evidence that should induce us to believe, that the Priests and Pharisees throughly believed the Report they made them; or that if they could not but apprehend that there was something extraordinary that they had seen or heard, yet it doth not appear that any of the Watch pretended *to have seen* or conversed with *Christ* after he was risen; or to have testified that Resurrection to those who placed them. And therefore 'tis not to be wonder'd at, that the Relation of the Soldiers should have no Effect on Persons so circumstanced as the High Priest and Rulers, and Pharisees, any more *than if nothing wonderful had happened to have been seen, felt, reported, or believed.*

VI. That *the Body's being gone out of the Sepulchre* on the third Day early, was a *Fact notorious* to the whole City, and impossible to be accounted for, but either by the Removal or Resurrection of it. That it was removed by *the Enemies of Christ* can never, with any Shew of Reason, be said, because then there could have been no Possibility of his Friends ever so much as pretending his Resurrection. And therefore, unless his Enemies would allow that he really was risen according to his Prediction, they had no other Refuge left them, but charging the Disciples with the Theft of it. And as the Report
of

of their taking it away by Force, from a Band of armed Soldiers, would have been too ridiculous to have gained any Credit, all that remained was to charge them with a *private Theft*: *They came by Night, and, as we suppose, stole him away whilst we slept.* And therefore,

VII. *Matthew's* whole Account is plain and natural, and this Part of his History hath every Circumstance of Credibility and Truth attending it; and he ought therefore to be *admitted as an Evidence* in a Fact, which he could easily have abundant Certainty of the Truth of. The Soldiers, upon their Flight from the Sepulchre, were obliged, for their own Safety and Honour, to make their Excuse to the Rulers. Their Return into the City, their going to the Priests, the gathering the Council to examine them, and their reporting that *the Disciples stole the Body*, were all publick Things, and could not be concealed. The Report itself, that *the Disciples stole away the Body*, *Matthew* knew to be a Lye. As the Soldiers made this Report upon their Dismission from the Council, 'twas evident they acted by *the Council's Order*; especially as the Report itself was *so dishonourable to Jesus*, whom they had just put to Death; and therefore as the Report was a Lye, and certainly known to be a Lye, Money was *the proper Inducement* to engage the Soldiers to spread it; and had there been no other Way to prove the giving it, the Story they reported would have abundantly confirmed the Truth of it. And therefore this Part of Gospel History is an authentick Vindication of *Christ's* Disciples, from having fraudulently convey'd away the dead Body of their Master. I shall only add,

VIII. That the remarkable Circumstance of *wrapping up the dead Body in Spices*, by *Joseph* and *Nicodemus*, according to the Manner of the *Jews* in burying, is full Proof that *Jesus was dead*, and known to be

be dead. Had there indeed been *any Remains* of Life in him, when taken down from the Cross, the *pungent Nature* of the * Myrrh and Aloes, their strong Smell, their Bitterness, their being wrapped round his Body in Linnens with a Roller, † and over his Head and Face with a Napkin, *as was the Custom of the Jews to bury*, must entirely have extinguished them. Besides, all the Evangelists agree, that *Joseph had begged the Body of Jesus off Pilate*; who finding from the Centurion, who guarded the Cross, that he had been *παλαι sometime dead*, gave it to him. *Joseph ηρε το σωμα took and carried off the Body*. Now had there been any Design to publish a false Resurrection, they had the best Opportunity for it, that they could desire, as the Body was in their Power, and they could have done with it as they pleased. And had there been any Signs of Life in it, they would undoubtedly have taken the proper Care to recover it, and not immediately have placed it, wrapt in Spices, in a cold and damp Sepulchre, which was the most effectual way, wholly to extinguish all Remains of Life. But *Joseph's* thus burying him, shews there was no Imposture intended. And renders every Pretence and Insinuation of his not being really dead, quite impertinent and groundless. And that there is as little Reason to doubt of his Resurrection as his Death, will appear from the Witnesses, whom we are now to examine.

* Of the Myrrh, *Dioscorides* says that 'tis *δρακτική, πικρά, δριμύεια, pungent, bitter, sharp or biting*. l. 1, c. 77. And of the Aloes, that 'tis *εαρυσσμος ολη η απογενομενη πικροτατη*. All of it strong scented, and exceeding bitter, l. 3. c. 25.

† Thus *Lazarus*, when buried, had his Face bound about with a Napkin. Joh. xi. 44. The Body of Jesus was wound in Linnen Cloaths with the Spices, Joh. xix. 40. and Peter found the Napkin that was about his Head, wrapped together in a Place by itself. Vid. *Chifflet de Lint. Sepulch.* Ch. 8. et *Geir. de Hebr. Lucru*, c. 5. §. 8. 10.

C H A P. VI.

*The Appearance of the Angels to the Women,
after the Resurrection.*

TIS natural to think, that such of the Disciples of Christ, who first attended, on the Day of his Resurrection, the Sepulchre where he was laid, should have the first Notice of this important Event, and thus it actually happened, of which we have the following united Evidence.

Mat. xxviii.	Mark xvi.	Luke xxiv.	John xx. 1,
1.	1, 2.	1—10.	2.
<i>In the end of the Sabbath, as it began to dawn towards the first Day of the Week, came Mary Magdalene, and the other Mary, to the Sepulchre.</i>	<i>When the Sabbath was past; Mary Magdalene, and Mary the Mother of James and Salome — very early on the Morning, the first Day of the Week, came unto the Sepulchre, as the Sun was about to rise.</i>	<i>Upon the first Day of the Week, very early in the Morning, they (Mary Magdalene, and Joanna, and Mary the Mother of James, and other Women with them) — came unto the Sepulchre.</i>	<i>The first Day of the Week, cometh Mary Magdalene, whilst it was yet dark, unto the Sepulchre. WE know not where they have laid him.</i>

The Historians here all agree as to the Time. *In the end of the Sabbath* *, *Ὁψε σαββατων* is, *after the*

* *Ὁψε σαββατων* means *after the Sabbath was over*. Thus *Ὁψε μυστηριων*, when the Mysteries were over. Philost. *Vit. Apol.* as

*the Sabbath or Week was over; agreeable to Mark, διαγενομενς σαββατς, when the Sabbath was past: Towards the first Day of the Week, as Matthew; εις μιαν σαββατων is * on the first Day of the Week, as Mark, Luke and John; Διαν πρωι, as Mark †, ορθρς βαθεος as Luke, both Expressions signifying, very early on the Morning; whilst it was yet dark, as John ||, σκοτιας ετι υσσης, in the dusk of the Morning; επιφωσκηση, sci. ημερα, at the dawn of Day, as Matthew;*

as cited by the learned Bos Exer. in Mat. xxviii. 1. I add a more unquestionable Authority. Της ωρας εγγινετο οψι, when the Time was elapsed. *Ulpian* on the Place explains it: Τουτ-εστιν η δικασιμος ωρα των διαιτητων παρεληλυθει. When the legal Time for the Determination of the Arbitrators was over, Demost. *Adver. Mid.* p. 619. F.

* So εις την υσεραιναν, sci. ημεραν. *On the Morrow.* Isai Orat. 1. p. 366. *Ælian. V. Hist.* l. 2. c. 18. p. 115. εις εστησαν ημεραν, on the appointed Day. *Herodian.* l. 2. c. 7.

† Ορθρς βαθεος. Summo mane. *Very early in the Morning.* Thus in *Theocritus*, we have not only βαθυς υπνος, a deep Sleep, *Idyl.* 8. v. 65. but παισδεν εις βαθυν ορθρον, playing till early in the Morning, *Idyl.* 18. v. 14. So *Plato* in *Criton.* Init. Πηνικα μαλις; Ορθρς βαθυς. *What Time precisely? Early in the Morning.* So also in *Protag.* p. 310. *Hippocrates* came to *Socrates* his House, and rapped at his Door, της παρελθουσς νυκτος ταυτησι ετι βαθεος ορθρς, this last Night very early in the Morning.

|| It has been reckoned a Difficulty, how to reconcile *Mark*, who determines the Time by ανατειλαντο ηλις, at the rising of the Sun, as we render it, with *Matthew*, whose Expression is, επιφωσκηση, sci. ημερα, at Day-break; and with *John*, whose Phrase is, σκοτιας ετι υσσης, whilst it was yet dusk. Vid. *Hieron. Epist. ad Hebid.* Quæst. 4. et. 5. p. 417. Various Solutions have been given of it, as may be seen in the Commentators. But there is a Passage in *Herodotus*, Lib. 3. c. 85, 86, 87, 88. that will I think quite remove this Difficulty. When the *Persian* Princes had destroyed the *Magi*, they made this Agreement; that whichever of their Horses, after they had mounted them in the Suburbs, should first neigh, ηλις επανατελλοντος, he should be King. *Darius* tells this Agreement to his Groom, in which Relation, *Herodotus* varies the Phrase, and says, αμα τω ηλιω ανοιτι, and adds; that according to Agreement, the six Lords were present at the Place appointed, αμ ημερη διαφωσκουση, or as he says a little lower, αμα τω ηλιω ανοιτι, which was the Time when their

threw ; or, *ανατειλαντος ηλις*, whilst the Sun was rising, as *Mark* ; but before, as is evident from his Expression of *λιαν πρωι*, very early in the Morning. Some Copies read, *Ανατελλοντος*, which is more expressly, as the Sun was rising ; cum, Sole nondum orto, jam lucet, as the *Latins* * express it, i. e. Day break before the Sun is up.

They do not disagree as to the Persons who were present. *Matthew* names *Mary Magdalene*, and the other *Mary*. *Mark* names both these, and adds *Salome*. *Luke* mentions *Mary Magdalene*, and the other *Mary*, adding *Joanna*, and other Women with them. *John* names only *Mary Magdalene*, but intimates very plainly, that there were more, by

Horses were to come out. What I would observe from hence is, that *αμα ημερη διαφωσκηση*, at Day-break, is the same with *αμα ηλιω ανιοντι*, at the Sun's return ; and that the Return of the Sun means, not his actually rising above the Horizon, so as to be visible, but his so returning as to cause the first Day-break, till the bringing on the full Day. In like manner, *ηλιω επανατελλοντι*, *Herodotus* explains by *ηλιω ανιοντι*, making the rising and the returning Sun, to denote the same Time, the Time from the first Dawn, to the full Appearance of the Sun ; for the Time of Trial was to be during this Season, the Horses being to be brought forth, and the Princes to mount, and meet at the Place, at the return of the Sun, or Day-break. *Justin*, Lib. 1. c. 10. gives the same Relation : *Pacti inter se sunt ut die statuta omnes equos ante regiam primo mane perducerent, & cujus equus inter solis ortum, hinnitum primus edidisset, is rex esset.* They agreed to meet on a certain Day, early in the Morning, and he whose Horse should first neigh, whilst the Sun was rising, should be King. This perfectly reconciles *Mark* with the other Evangelists ; for according to him, the Women came very early in the Morning, *ηλις ανατειλαντος* or *ανατελλοντος*, whilst the Sun was rising, but before it was up, i. e. *τη επιφωσκηση ημερα*, at Day dawn, as *Matthew*, or in the dusk of the Morning, as *John*. And thus 'tis well explain'd by *Theophylact*. in loc. After the Sabbath, saith he, is the same with *Luke's*, Very early in the Morning ; and with *Mark's*, early in the Morning, *ανατειλαντος τε ηλις*, whilst the Sun was rising. *Ηλιον γαρ ενταυθα νοειν οφειλομεν τας ορθρινας τε Ηλις αυγας.* We must here understand the Sun of those early Beams, by which he causes the return of Morning, viz. before his rising above the Horizon.

* *Censorin. de die Nat.* c. 24.

introducing *Mary Magdalene*, as saying to the Apostles: *We know not where they have laid him.*

Matthew, *Mark*, and *Luke* observe, that these Women, after *Christ* was buried, went and beheld the Sepulchre, and saw how the Body was laid, or how 'twas placed in the Sepulchre, and a large Stone rolled to the Mouth of it; after which, as *Luke* * tells us, *they returned, and rested the Sabbath-day, according to the Commandment.* But before they came back again to the Sepulchre on the first Day,

Mark xvi. 1.

*They had bought
sweet Spices, that they
might come and anoint
him.*

Luke xxiii. 56.

xxiv. 1.

*They prepared Spices
and Ointments, and
came bringing the
Spices.*

Tho' *Matthew* and *John* do not mention these Ointments and Spices, so they do not contradict *Mark* and *Luke*. *Joseph* of *Arimathea* had taken Care of the Linnen that was to wrap up his dead Body, and *Nicodemus* brought with him † *Myrrh* and *Aloes*, to wind with the Linnen Cloaths about him,

* *Luke* xxiii. 55, 56.

† *Non unxerunt ob temporis angustias, sed Aromata apposuerunt.* Grot. in *Joh.* xix. 40. I am the rather inclined to think this Mixture a dry one, because *Dioscorides* speaking of the Properties of the Aloes, expressly says; *Ξηρον δε επιπασθεν τραυματα κολλα, κη επιλοι ελεη κη κατασελλει, that being sprinkled over the Body dry, it heals Wounds, closes and cicatrizes them*, Lib. 3. c. 25. p. 182. and of the Myrrh, *κολλα δε κη τα εν τη κεφαλη τραυματα επιπασσομενη, that it closes and heals the Wounds of the Head, being sprinkled on them*, Lib. 1. c. 77. p. 43. I think also, the Form of the Expression used by *John*, *Εδησαν αυτο οδοις μετα των αρωματων, They wound the Body in Linnen Cloaths with the Spices*, seems to denote, that they were dry ones; for if the Body was anointed before, the Expression doth not appear natural to say, *They wound it about with Spices*, which properly denotes, that they laid in the Spices as they were winding it round with its Funer-

him, *as is the common Manner of the Jews to bury.* Nor indeed would the Time allow of greater Funeral

ral Linnens. Dry Spices were certainly made use of in the Funeral of the Jewish Kings, as in *Asa's*: And *Jeremiah*, speaking of *Zedekiah*, says: *Thou shalt die in Peace, and with the Burnings of thy Fathers, the former Kings which were before thee, so shall they burn Odors for thee*, Jerem. xxxiv. 5. But as in the Case of our Saviour, these Spices could not be burnt, neither Time nor Circumstances allowing it, *Nicodemus* and *Joseph* seem to have given him, as far as they could, a Royal Funeral, by wrapping round his Body those Spices, which, had they had proper Time, they would have burnt in Honour of him. It was prophesied of him, that *he should make his Grave with the Wicked*, since his Enemies esteemed him buried as a Malefactor, and at the same Time, *with the Rich in his Death*, Isai. liii. 9. I am farther confirmed in this Opinion, by the constant Use of the Words *Αρωμα*, and *Αρωματα*, in the 70, who always denote by them dry Spices, and frequently in Opposition to aromatick Oils and Ointments. Thus *Hezekiah* shewed to the Ambassadors of the King of Babylon τα αρωματα η το ελαιον. The Spices and the precious Ointment, as we render it, 2 King. xx. 13. And of *Asa* 'tis said, that they laid him in the Bed, which they filled αρωματων, η γην μυρων, with Aromatick Spices, and different Sorts of Ointments, 2 Chron. xvi. 14. So that dry Spices and Unguents both were in Use in the Funeral of great Men. *Nicodemus* prepared the former for *Christ*, and *Mary* and her Companions the latter. The αρωματα were the Ingredients properly, of which the Oils and Unguents were made. Thus we read, that the Sons of the Priests were μυρσοι τε μυρε εν τοις αρωμασι, Confectioners of the Ointment with Spices, 2 Chron. ix. 30. And in *Exodus*, the Lord ordered *Moses* to take principal Spices, נִשְׁמִים translated by the 70, in the foregoing Passage, αρωματα, viz. of pure Myrrh, Cinnamon, sweet Calamus, and Cassia, the dry Ingredients, to be mixed with a proper Quantity of Olive Oil, to be made into an Holy Ointment, Exod. xxx. 23, 24, 25. And indeed I question whether the Word αρωμα, without some Addition to it, will be found to signify aromatick Oils and Ointments, in any approved Authors. *Herodian* useth it frequently, but always in its proper Sense, to denote Spices strictly so called. And, what is to our immediate Purpose, tells us, that after *Severus* his Body was burnt την κονην συν αρωμασι εν εις καλπην αλαδα-σιν εμβαλοντες απεκομιζον ενς την Ρωμην, they threw his Ashes into an Urn with Spices, and carried them to Rome, i. e. unquestionably with dry Spices, συν αρωμασι, the very Expression of the Evangelist, *Herod.* l. 3. c. 15. §. 15. And in the Account he gives of

neral Honours to be paid him by them than these, because *the Passover was now at hand*, and the Sabbath

of the *Apotheosis* of the Roman Emperors, he says: Ες δὴ το οίκημα το δευτερον ανακομισαντες την κλινην, τιθεασιν αρωματα τε κ' θυμιαματα παντα οσα γη φερει· εἴτα τινες καρποι η ποαι χυμοι τε συμ-βαλομενοι προς ευωδιαν ανακομιζονται, κ' σωρηδον χεονται. " That carrying the Bed of State into the second Division of the Funeral Pile, they throw in *Spices and Perfumes*, of all Kinds that the Earth produces. That then they add Fruits, Herbs, and Juices, to encrease the sweet Odor, and pour them on by Heaps, 'till at last the Place is full of *these Spices*." In which Account there is no mention of Oils and Unguents, but only of the αρωματα, or Spices. Id. l. 4. c. 2. § 16, 18. *Theophrastus*, in his *History of Plants*, also plainly distinguishes the αρωματα, or Spices, from the Ointments, and speaks of these as compounded of the other. Τα δε αλλα παντα τα ευοσμα ος προς τα αρωματα χρωνται, τα μεν εξ Ινδων κομίζεται — οιον — κωμακον· ετερον δε ειναι το κωμακον, καρποι· το δε ετερον παραμισγυσιν εις τα σπυδαιω-τατα των μυρων. " All other Kind of sweet smelling Things, which they use for Spices, they bring some from India, &c. as the *Comacum*, which is of two Sorts, one of which is for making the most exquisite Ointments." Then he numbers the various Species of these αρωματα or Spices. Ος μεν εν εις τα αρωματα χρωνται σχεδον ταδε εσι· κασια, κινναμωμον, &c. " The Things they make use of for Spices, are Cassia, Cinnamon, &c. reckoning amongst them, Roots, Barks, Branches, Woods, Seeds, Tears, and Flowers," but no Oils or Ointments. *Hist. Plant.* l. 9. c. 7. Yea, he expressly says, the Αρωματα were dry Spices. Οι τα Αρωματα κ' τα διαπασματα συντιδεντες, ξηροις προς ξηρα. " Who mix Spices and sweet Powders, dry Things with Dry." *Lib. de Odor.* p. 442. and that in Opposition to those who compound Liquids with Liquids; or, Liquids with dry Things. And a little after, he expressly distinguishes between the τα μυρα and the τα αρωματα, the Ointments and Spices, both which they sometimes mixed with Wine. Id. p. 443. And to mention no more, he says: Τα δε αρωματα παντα, σχεδον δε κ' ευοσμα, πλην των ανδων, ξηρα κ' θερμα κ' στυπτικα, κ' δηκτικα. " All the Αρωματα or Spices, and almost all the Perfumes, except Flowers, are dry, warm, styptic and pungent. *De Odor.* p. 445." Vid. etiam *Cl. Salmas. Plinian. Exercit.* p. 1058. *Col.* 2. C. D. These Things, which were properly the αρωματα, were the *Drugs* out of which these *aromatick Oils* and Unguents were made. I could easily enlarge on this Head, but fear I have been already tedious. From the whole, as it plainly appears that the αρωματα were different from Oils and Ointments,

bath approaching. And therefore *Mary* and her Companions prepared *αρωματα και μυρα να αλειψωσιν αυτον*, *Spices and Ointments that they might anoint him*; which had not probably been done by the two former, who gave him a Sepulchre after his Crucifixion.

ments, and as both were made use of in the Funeral of great Persons; as *Joseph* and *Nicodemus* are expressly said to have wound up *Christ's* Body *συν αρωμασιν* with *Spices*, without any mention of the other; and as the Women are said by *Mark* to have bought *αρωματα να αλειψωσιν αυτον*, *Spices*, viz. to make into an Ointment, *that they might anoint him*, *Mar. xvi. 1.* and by *Luke* to have prepared *αρωματα κ' μυρα*, *Spices and Ointments*, i. e. Ointments which they made of *Spices*, *Luke xxiii. 56.* I think 'tis extremely probable, if not certain, that the *αρωματα* brought by *Nicodemus*, were those dry *Spices* which were used in the Funerals of great Persons; and that therefore the Women brought their *aromatick Ointments*, that no Honours might be wanting to the Funeral of their Lord.

If it be thought a Difficulty, how *so large a Mixture* of *One Hundred Pound Weight*, as this was, could be wrapt round the Body, I answer; that 'tis very far from being clear to me, that *λιτρα*, in this Place, signifies *A Pound Weight*, when it may as well denote, *The Price it cost*. *J. Pollux* tells us, *Στατηρα δε οι της κωμωδιας ποιηται την λιτραν λεγουσι την μεν γαρ λιτραν ειρηκασιν οι Σικελοι κωμωδοι*: That the comick Poets call the Stater by the Name of *Litra*, and that the Sicilian comic Poets make use of this Word. *Lib. 4. c. 24. §. 173.* With whom, in Part, agrees *Hesychius*. *Λιτροσκοπης. Αργυρομοινης απο της Σικελικης ονοματος, ο καλειται λιτρα.* The *λιτροσκοποι*, the *Inspectors* of the *λιτρα* are certain *Money-changers*, so named from a *Sicilian Word* or *Piece of Money*, called *Litra*. And *Phavorinus*: *Λιτρα. Οβολος οι δε νομισμα παρα Σικελους.* The *λιτρα* denotes the *Obolus*, or, according to others, a *Sicilian Piece of Money*. If we understand the *Litra* of the *Stater*, the Value of this Mixture will be easily known. The *Silver Stater* was worth about *Two Shillings and Four-pence Sterling*, and therefore *One Hundred* of them will be about *Eleven Pounds Thirteen Shillings*. The *Golden Stater* was worth about *Sixteen Shillings and four Pence Sterling*, *One Hundred* of which amount to about *Eighty One Pounds Thirteen Shillings*. If we understand the *λιτρα* of the *Golden Stater*, it may be more agreeable to the Character of *Nicodemus*, who was a *Ruler of the Jews*, and therefore, probably, in very plentiful Circumstances,

Mat. xxviii.

2.

Mark xvi.

3, 4.

Luke xxiv.

2.

John xx.

20.

*And they
said amongst
themselves,
who shall roll
us away the
Stone from
the Door of
the Sepul-
chre? for it
was great.*

*And behold
there was a
great Earth-
quake; for
the Angel of
the Lord de-
scended from
Heaven, and
came and rol-
led back the
Stone from
the Door.*

*And when
they looked,
they saw that
the Stone was
rolled away,
for it was
very great.*

*And they
found the
Stone rolled
away from
the Sepul-
chre.*

*Mary Mag-
dalene--seeth
the Stone
taken away
from the Se-
pulchre.*

The Witnesses here all agree, that when the Women came, *they found the Stone rolled* or taken away. The Women could not do it, the Stone being *too large* for them to move. It was not done by the *Jews*, for they could have no Interest of Malice and Revenge to answer by it, nor did they think

think it *lawful* for them to do it on the Sabbath-day, because it was a *Work of Labour*, *Matthew* therefore ascribes it to an *Angel*, and the rest of the *Evangelists* confirm this Account, by their expressly mentioning every one an *Angelical Appearance*.

Mat. xxviii.

3, 5.

His Countenance was like Lightning, and his Raiment white as Snow; and for fear of him the Keepers did shake, and became as dead Men.

This not contradicted by the other *Evangelists*.

Mat. xxviii.
8.

And they departed from the Sepulchre.

Mark xvi. 5.

And entering into the Sepulchre.

Luke xxiv. 3.

And they entred in, and found not the Body of the Lord Jesus.

John xx. 2.

They have taken away the Lord out of the Sepulchre, and we know not where they have laid him.

Mark and Luke expressly affirm that they enter'd into the Sepulchre. Matthew more than intimates it, when he says they departed, ἐξελθσαι ἀπο το μνημειου, went out from the Sepulchre, and John by telling us that

that *Mary* found him not in it. They also agree that when they came into the Sepulchre, *they found the Body gone.* *Luke* and *John* expressly affirm it, as do *Matthew* and *Mark*, by the Account they give us of what the Angel said to them.

Matt. xxviii. 2, 5.	Mark xvi. 5, 6.	Luke xxiv. 4, 5.
<i>The Angel of the Lord rolled back the Stone, and sat upon it,</i>	<i>They saw a young Man on the right Side, cloathed in a long white Garment,</i>	<i>And it came to pass, as they were much perplexed thereabouts,</i>
<i>Fear ye not.</i>	<i>And they were affrighted.</i>	<i>Behold two Men stood by them, or as the Word should have been rendered, suddenly appeared to them, in shining Garments. And as they were afraid, and bowed their Faces to the</i>
<i>And the Angel answered, and said unto the Women.</i>	<i>And he said unto them.</i>	<i>Earth,</i> <i>They said unto them.</i>

These several Accounts, when reduced to their proper Order, will lie thus. As *Mary Magdalene* and the other Women were within the Sepulchre, and found the Stone rolled away from the Mouth of the Cave, and the dead Body not in the Place where it was laid, they were greatly perplexed at what had happened; how the Stone should be removed, and what was become of the Body. During this Di-

strefs they perceived *two Angels*, in the Shape of Men, that suddenly appeared to them; both in shining Garments; and one of them in the Form of *a young Man*, cloathed in a white Vesture reaching down to his Feet, and sitting on the Stone, that had been rolled from the Mouth of the Rock, on the Right-hand towards the Place where the Head lay; the other on the left, and probably farther in the Cave, towards the Place of the Feet. At this Appearance they were greatly frightened. But the Angels immediately said, he who sat on the Stone, *in the Name of both*, &c. What hath perplexed this Account, is the *injudicious* reading of the Words, *επεσησαν αυτοις*, *stood by them*, in *Luke*; by which the Angels are put in a *standing Posture*, and *placed near* the Women. Whereas the Words neither denote *the Posture* they were in, nor *their nearness* to the Women, but their * *unexpected Appearance*, whether standing or sitting, whether near them or farther from them. If they appeared to all the Women, as most likely they did, as they did afterwards to *Mary Magdalene*, I think their Places must be as I have described them; for she saw them placed, *one at the Head, and the other at the Feet, where the Body of Jesus had lain*; one on the Outside, but near the Cave towards his Head, the other farther in, on the left towards the Feet. For had they not looked into the Cave, they

* Thus, *the Angel of the Lord*, *επιση αυτοις*, *came upon them*, i. e. *suddenly appeared*, *Luke* ii. 9. *Acts* xii. 7. *επιτας αυτω ο κυριος*. *The Lord came on or appeared to him*, *Acts* xxiii. 11. Thus also *Plutarch*, who tells us, that *Demetrius*, in his Dream, *ανθρωπον εδοξεν αυτω καλον επισαντα φθεξασθαι τοσπον, Μελανα*. Thought he saw a *Man appearing* to him, who pronounced only the Word, *Black*. *De Orac. Defect.* p. 434. E. So also *Philostratus* tells us, that *Apollonius* so pleased *Trophonius*, by going into his Cave, *ως επισαντα τοις ιερευσι, as that he appeared to the Priests*, and commanded them to follow him into *Aulis*. *De vit. Apol.* l. 8. c. 8. p. 421. Id. p. 494. B. et 534. l. ult. Edit. Paris.

would

would not have known that the Body was gone. And *Matthew* expressly tells us that the Angel, who spoke to them, was on the Outside of the Cave, *sitting on the Stone*. But as the History doth not mention the Place of both, we need not be greatly solicitous to fix them. In this Account the Reader will observe, that there is not *the appearance* of a Contradiction between the Witnesses. *Luke* says that *two Angels* appeared to them. *Matthew* says, that *an Angel* rolled away the Stone, and spoke to them; and *Mark*, that they saw a young Man clothed in white, who spoke to them; but neither intimate or affirm that there was but one, and therefore do not contradict *Luke*. *Luke* says, *they*, the * Angels, *spoke to them*. They did so, but by him who sat on the Stone, and spoke in the Name of both. *Luke* relates the Appearance of *both the Angels*; *Matthew* and *Mark* only the Appearance of *the principal one*, who delivered the Message they were sent on, in the Name of both. And tho' some suggest *the want of Harmony* in this Account, because the Angels are called *Men*, by *Mark* and *Luke*, and *Angels*, by *Matthew* and *John*, 'tis without any Reason. For as the former called them according to *the Appearance* they assumed, and the latter according to what *they really were*, they were called with equal Propriety by both Names. So that the Testimony of the Evangelists, is absolutely consistent thus far, without any the least Contradiction in their Report whatsoever.

* The same appearing Difference, and Manner of speaking, may be observed in other Authors, of unquestionable Credit and Authority. Thus *Dionysius Halicarn.* p. 603. *init.* tells us, that *the Tribunes* accused *Cæso Quintius* of a capital Crime. *Livy*, on the contrary, says, Lib. 3. c. 11. e. 14. *Aulus Virginius, ex collegio unus, Cæsoni capitis diem dicit*; that it was *A. Virginius*, one of the Tribunes, i. e. as *Dionysius* himself, a little after, explains it, p. 607. *ἢ δὲ ὁ τὰς λόγους ὑπὲρ αὐτῶν ποιούμενος, Αὐλὸς Οὐεργίνιος.* He spoke in the Name of the rest.

Mat. xxviii. 5,
6, 7.

Fear ye not.

*I know that
ye seek Jesus who
was crucified.*

*He is not here,
for he is risen, as
he said.*

*Come see the
Place where the
Lord lay.*

*And go quick-
ly and tell his
Disciples.*

*That he is ri-
sen from the dead,
and behold he go-
eth before you in-
to Galilee. There
shall ye see him.
So I have told
you.*

Mark xvi. 6, 7.

*Be not af-
frighted.*

*Ye seek Jesus
of Nazareth, who
was crucified.*

*He is risen, He
is not here.*

*Behold the Place
where they laid
him.*

*But go your
way, tell his Dis-
ciples*

And Peter

*That he goeth
before you into
Galilee, there
shall ye see him,
as he said unto
you.*

Luke xxiv. 5,
6, 7, 8.

*Why seek ye
the living amongst
the dead?*

*He is not here,
but is risen.*

*Remember how
he spake to you,
when he was yet
in Galilee, say-
ing: The Son of
Man must be de-
livered into the
Hands of sinful
Men, and be cru-
cified, and the
Third Day rise
again. And they
remembered his
Words.*

The

The Reader will observe, that the three Evangelists, as far as they report the same Part of the Angels Discourse, to the Women, wonderfully agree, tho' there is a considerable Variety in the Expression; and that even what each relates different from the other harmonizes with all; and that what is recorded by the Three, in what they severally add, may be read in one continued Speech, absolutely consistent, and connected in all its Parts. And I think this gives a *strong Air* of Probability, and Certainty to the Relation. Each reports the Words spoken, either as he heard them from the Persons who saw and heard the Angels, or as he was informed by others who conversed with those Persons. And tho' each hath some Particular, that the other hath not, and the Words are not exactly the same, even where they agree in the Thing; yet the whole, when viewed together, appears uniform and suitable to the Occasion, under all these *different Forms* of Expression, and Methods of Conveyance and Information: An evident Proof of *the Simplicity and Integrity* of the Relators, and that there was no Intention to *cook up* an artful Story, to impose on the weak and incredulous Part of Mankind.

Mat. xxviii. 8.

And they departed quickly from the Sepulchre, with Fear and great Joy.

Mark xvi. 8.

And they went out quickly, and fled from the Sepulchre, for they trembled, and were amazed.

Luke xxiv. 9.

And they returned from the Sepulchre.

What the Three Evangelists here relate of the Women, that they went out quickly, and fled from the Sepulchre thro' Fear, is to be understood of all of them, *Mary Magdalene* excepted; who
 tho'

tho' undoubtedly she was amazed at the Vision, and what the Angels had thus spoken to them, yet doth not appear to have fled with the others; or rather to have fled with them, and soon returned; for she was at the Sepulchre, after they were gone, and saw *Jesus* himself, before any of the rest of them.

C H A P. VII.

Of the several Appearances of CHRIST.

THE first Appearance of our Blessed Lord, after his Resurrection, was to *Mary Magdalene*, as appears from the following History.

Mark xvi. 9.

John xx. 11—17.

I. Appearance of CHRIST.

Now when *Jesus* was risen, early, the first Day of the Week, he appeared first to *Mary Magdalene*, out of whom
he

But Mary had stood without at the Sepulchre, weeping; and as she wept, she stooped down to the Sepulchre, viz. to look into it, and sees two Angels in white, sitting, one towards the Head, and the other towards the Feet, where the Body of Jesus had lain. And they say to her: Woman, why weepest thou? She said unto them: They have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him. And having said these Things, she turned back, and sees Jesus standing; but knew not that it was Jesus. Jesus saith unto her: Woman, why weepest thou? Whom seekest thou? She, supposing him to be the Gardener, says to him: Sir, If thou hast borne him

he had cast seven Devils. him hence, tell me where thou hast laid him, and I will take him away. Jesus saith unto her : Mary ! She turning says to him : Master ! And immediately flung herself down at his Feet and embraced them. Jesus says to her : Touch me, Embrace me not ; for I do not yet ascend to my Father. But go to my Brethren, and say unto them : I ascend unto my Father and your Father, and my God and your God.

Grotius, and most other Interpreters that I have seen, make this Appearance of *Christ* to *Mary Magdalene*, the same with the Appearance of *Christ* to the Women mentioned by *Matthew* xxviii. 9. and think, that the Appearance of the Angel mentioned by *Matthew*, *Mark*, and *Luke*, which was made to the Women in common, was also the same with that which *John* here mentions as made to *Mary Magdalene*. But I think there is the fullest Evidence to the contrary, and that this Appearance here mentioned by *John*, was only to *Mary Magdalene*. For * *Matthew* tells us, that after the Angel had spoken to the Women, they departed quickly from the Sepulchre ; and *Mark* †, that they went out quickly, and fled from the Sepulchre ; whereas *Mary Magdalene* either did not flee at all from it, or immediately returned to it ; for, as *John* says, she stood without, εισηκει προς το μνημειον, had been standing, or had stood at the Sepulchre, but without the Door of the Cave, weeping ; seeming resolved not to leave it, 'till she had received some full Assurance what was become of *Christ's* Body. Nor is there any mention in the three Evangelists, of *Christ's* speaking to *Mary*, nor in

* *Matthew* xxviii. 8.

† *Mark* xvi. 8.

John,

John, of the Angel's speaking to the Women. But what I think will put this beyond all doubt, is what *Mark* tells us; who, after reporting the Appearance of the Angel to the Women, declaring to them the Resurrection of *Christ*, relates as a quite distinct Thing, *Christ's* first appearing to *Magdalene*. *Magdalene* therefore *was alone* when she first saw *Christ*, and therefore her seeing him must be *after the first Appearances* of the Angels, and before the Appearance of *Christ* to *Mary Magdalene*, and her Companions in common, mentioned *Mat. xxviii. 9.* otherwise they would have seen *Christ* as soon as her; and therefore I think the History of this Appearance to her must be this recorded by *St. John*, and can be accounted for no other Way. Whereas the understanding *John* in this View, makes the whole Account of the Evangelists clear and consistent. This also will abundantly account for the Reason why *John* mentions *only Mary Magdalene*, without naming the other Women; because none of them were present at this Appearance. And he gives a particular Account of this whole Interview, because the other Evangelists had omitted it, and omits *the previous Account* of the Angelical Appearances, because the others had distinctly related it. So that comparing these several Accounts, we have the whole History of this important Event compleat, and every Part of it is a Confirmation of the whole.

After *Mary Magdalene* had thus seen *Jesus*, she hastned to her Companions, and having joined them, they

Mat. xxviii.	Mark xvi.	Luke xxiv.	Johu xx. 2.
8.	8, 10.	9.	
<i>Did run to bring his Disciples Word.</i>	<i>She went and told them that had been with him, as they mourned and wept.</i>	<i>They re- turned from the Sepul- chre, and told all these Things to the Eleven, and to all the rest.</i>	<i>She run- neth, and cometh to Si- mon Peter, and to the o- ther Disciple whom Jesus loved, and saith unto them, They have taken away the Lord out of the Sepul- chre, and we know not where they have laid him.</i>
	<i>Neither said they any Thing to any Man, for they were a- fraid.</i>		

The Witnesses here all agree, as to the main Fact, viz. that the Women hastned from the Sepulchre, as soon as they had seen the Vision, and received the Message that was delivered to them, to inform the Apostles; but there are these *appearing Variations* in the Account.

Matthew says, They ran to bring *his Disciples Word*; *Luke*, that they told all these Things *to the Eleven and the rest*; *Mark*, to *them that had been with him*, which may include his Apostles and others; and *John* that they came to *Simon Peter and the be- loved Disciple*, without mentioning any other. A- gain, *Matthew* and *Luke* speak of *all the Women*, as making this Report. *John* makes the Relation to come *only from Mary Magdalene*, with whom *Mark* agrees, adding a very strong Circumstance in Con-

M

firmation

firmation of it: *Neither said they (the Women) any Thing to any Man for they were afraid.*

As to the first, the Persons to whom the Report was made, Three of the Witnesses will be allowed perfectly to harmonize; for *the Disciples*, as mentioned by *Matthew*; *They that had been with him*, as *Mark*; *The Eleven and the rest*, as *Luke*, are Expressions that may all of them properly be applied to the same Persons; and tho' *John* says, that *Mary* came to *Simon Peter* and *the beloved Disciple*, and told them what had happened, yet he by no means denies that the Report was made to the rest of the Disciples. We read *John* xx. 10. that *Peter* and *John*, after they had been at the Sepulchre, *απηλθον παλιν προς εαυτους*, returned again to their own Home; and I infer from thence, that they were at their own Home when *Mary* and her Companions first went to them after their return from the Sepulchre; and that this is the Occasion of *John's* saying: *She cometh to Simon Peter, and the other Disciple whom Jesus loved.* Having met with them, she probably told them, that she had a Message from Christ to them all; for so the Order ran to her and her Companions: *Tell my Brethren* *; and to *Mary Magdalene* in particular: *Go to my Brethren, and say to them* †. The two Apostles having gathered the rest together, and brought *Mary* and the other Women to them, she related to them the several Appearances, as they happened in Order. That this was the Fact, appears probable from the Circumstance of the Time. *Early in the Morning*, when the several Apostles were each at their respective Habitations, and from its being I think certain, that *Peter* and *John* were at theirs. So that the Testimony of the Evangelists, in their different Narrations, is here perfectly consistent.

* Mat. xxviii. 10.

† John xx. 17.

Again,

Again, *Matthew* and *Luke* say, *They*, the Women, ran to bring the Disciples word, and told these Things to the Eleven; whereas *Mark* and *John* expressly affirm, that *Mary Magdalene* was the Reporter; but then these two last Writers happily clear up the Difficulty. For *John* plainly intimates that other Persons were with *Mary*, when she made the Report, when he introduces her as saying: *WE know not where they have laid him*; and *Mark* says, *they said not any thing to any Man, because they were afraid*; i. e. they had not recover'd themselves enough from their Surprize and Terror, to be able to relate what they had seen; and therefore made their Report by *Mary Magdalene*, who had greater command of her Spirits, and was able calmly to give them the important Relation *. But before they had reached the Place, where the Eleven and other Disciples were met together, *Jesus* presented himself before all the Women that had been at the Sepulchre, of which *Matthew* hath preserved the following Account.

II. Appearance of CHRIST.

Mat. xxviii. 9, 10.

And as they went to tell his Disciples, Behold Jesus met them, saying: All Hail. And they came and held him by the Feet, and worshipped him. Then said Jesus unto them: Be not afraid. Go tell my Brethren, that they go into Galilee, and there shall they see me.

* Thus *Luke* says, *Peter* ran to the Sepulchre, *Luke* xxiv. 12. *John* says, *Peter* and *himself*; and even *Luke* ver. 24. Certain of them that were with us went to the Sepulchre. One as the Principal is often mentioned, where others were concerned, and not intended to be excluded.

This is plainly an Account of a *second Appearance* of *Christ*; the first being to *Mary Magdalene* alone, this to her and *her Companions* together; the first was to her only *standing at the Sepulchre*, this to all of them, as they were *returning to the Apostles*. To *Mary*, *Christ* declares *his Ascension* to his heavenly Father; but now orders them all to *bid his Disciples go into Galilee*, and assures them *they should see him there*. Where this Appearance particularly was, none of the Evangelists mention; only *Matthew* says, 'twas as they went to tell his Disciples; but most probably 'twas, whilst they were yet in the Garden where the Sepulchre lay. From *Matthew's* Account it appears that *Mary*, after the particular Appearance of *Christ* to her, had rejoined her Companions, and that as they were all pursuing their way Home through the Garden, *Jesus* met them; that *Mary Magdalene's* Testimony might have the greater Weight with the Apostles, being corroborated by what had happened to them all, and that they might more readily go into *Galilee*, when they found, that what the Angels had said concerning *Christ's* going thither before them, was confirmed by the immediate Order and Assurance of *Christ* himself. Soon after this they made their Report by *Mary Magdalene* to the Apostles, who seem all to have heard them patiently, tho' without believing any Thing of what they said, whilst they were relating the Appearances of the Angels, and the Message they had received from them; till at length *Mary* beginning to relate the Appearance of *Christ* to herself, and speaking of what she said to the Angels, that asked her *why she wept*: *They have taken away the Body of the Lord, and I know not where they have laid him*; *Peter* impatient to be satisfied of the Truth of this, went out directly to the Sepulchre, and was followed by *John*; who finding the Linnen Cloaths that were wrapt round him with the Spices, and the Nap-
kin

kin that was about his Head, both in the Sepulchre, without the Body, *believed*; or were fully satisfied, that Mary had thus far related the Truth, as to *the taking away the Body*; but not that Christ was risen, for as yet they knew not the Scripture, that he must rise again from the dead. And after this they returned again to their own Home. I think the Relation of St. John plainly favours this Account. The Words, which he report, she said to Peter, *They have taken away the Lord out of the Sepulchre, and we know not where they have laid him*, are the Words she said to the Angel, and seem to be her Relation of them to Peter, and the other Disciples; and upon her speaking these Words, St. John says: *Peter therefore went out, and that other Disciple, and came to the Sepulchre*; joining this Part of the Relation, and the going of the two Apostles to the Sepulchre together. And the Account is perfectly natural; for tho' Peter, and the other Apostles, seemed to look upon what they said of the Angels, and their Conversation with them, as mere Dreams, yet the Removal of the Body was a Thing of another Kind, in which they could immediately receive the fullest Satisfaction; and therefore, without staying to hear any farther of the Women, the two Disciples went out to inform themselves of the Truth of it. Luke's Narration favours this Account, who, after telling us that the Women reported the Appearances of the Angels, and the Message they deliver'd them, and that their Words seemed to the Apostles *idle Tales*, immediately subjoins*: *Then rose Peter and ran to the Sepulchre*; making him depart immediately, to see what was become of the Body, as soon as the Women declared it was not in the Sepulchre. In like Manner the two Disciples, in Answer to Christ's Question, Ver. 17.

* Luke xxiv. 12.

What manner of Communications are these that ye have one to another? answer him, amongst other Things; ver. 22, 23, 24. *Certain Women also of our Company made us astonished, which were early at the Sepulchre, and when they found not his Body, they came saying: That they had seen a Vision of Angels, which said, that he was alive. And † certain of them which were with us went to the Sepulchre, and found it even so as the Women had said.* Peter and John therefore immediately went out, upon hearing Christ's Body was gone, and therefore John joins these two Particulars together in his Narration, and then relates the Appearance of Christ to Mary, tho' that Appearance was in Order before it. Like Instances of Dislocation may be produced in other Historians, of unquestionable Character and Authority.

This is the Order in which this History lies, as it appears to me; having considered the several Accounts of the Evangelists, in the same Manner as I would have done any other four Authors, giving a Relation of the same Facts. And upon the whole, as the several Accounts are fairly capable of being reconciled, without any *unnatural Suppositions*, and forced Constructions, upon the plain Letter of the Words, and the Intimations dropped by one or other of the Historians themselves; I am forced, as *an honest Man*, and a Lover of Justice, to bring in my Verdict in Favour of these Witneses, and declare them fully consistent.

Obj. I. 'Tis urged, that Matthew says, ver. 1. and 9. *Jesus appeared to Mary Magdalene, and the other Mary, but Mark and John mention Mary Magdalene only.*

Ans. Mark and John speak of one Appearance, and Matthew of another; Mark and John of the *first Appearance* of Christ to Mary, after the other

† ΤΙΝΕΣ ΤΩΝ ΣΥΝ ΗΜΙΝ, *some of them that were with us, viz. Peter and John.*

Women,

Women, *Mark* xvi. 8. had fled from the Sepulchre at the Appearance of the Angel, where *Mary Magdalene* continued alone by herself; and *Matthew* of the second Appearance of *Christ* to *Mary*, and the rest of her Companions, as they were at a Distance from the Sepulchre, and hastning home, to make their Report to the Apostles.

Obj. II. *Matthew* says, *Jesus met the two Mariess by the Way, as they were returning home to the Disciples*; *John* says, *after Mary Magdalene had been at the Sepulchre, and had ran and told the Disciples the News, and came back again to the Sepulchre, she then saw Jesus and the Angels there.*

Ans. They speak of the same different Appearances as just mentioned before. But farther, it doth not appear from the Account of *John*, that *Mary Magdalene ran back* and told the Disciples what she had seen at the Sepulchre, and then returned to the Sepulchre, and saw *Jesus*. The two following Circumstances render this Account absolutely improbable. 'Tis certain from *John*, that *Mary Magdalene*, when first at the Sepulchre, had other Women with her; and that when she reported what she had then seen to the Apostles, those Women were present. * *Ουκ οίδαμεν, we know not where they have laid him*, Ver. 2. Now neither *John*, nor any other of the Historians, make the least mention of the Womens returning to the Sepulchre, after they had all reported to the Eleven, what they had seen, which they necessarily must have done, if *Mary* as yet had not seen *Christ*; because 'tis certain *Christ's* first Appearance was to her only; and therefore neither had the other Women as yet seen *Christ*; and therefore they must have come back to the Sepulchre,

* An Expression the more remarkable, because when speaking of herself only, she says, Ver. 13. *εκ οιδα, I know not where they have laid him.*

because they saw *Christ*, after his Appearance to *Mary*, in their Return home. Besides, the going of *Peter* and *John* to the Sepulchre, was immediately after the Relation of *Mary Magdalene*, and her Companions, to the Eleven. And therefore, if neither of them had as yet seen *Christ*, they must all have gone back again to the Grave; which is a Supposition that disturbs and confounds the whole Relation; and therefore the Supposition of such Return is unreasonable. I add farther, that tho' *John* mentions the running to *Peter* immediately after the Account, that *Mary Magdalene* saw the Stone taken from the Sepulchre, yet he never gives the least Intimation that *Mary* returned back to the Sepulchre; but after the Series of the History had been interrupted, by the Relation of *Peter* and *John's* running to the Sepulchre, he resumes it again, and connects it by a Word, that plainly shews it to be a Continuance of the foregoing Narration. Μαρια δε εισηκει προς το μνημειον. *But Mary had stood at the Sepulchre.* Had stood. When? What, whilst *Peter* and *John* were there? That not one of the Historians mentions, and from the whole Account, 'tis certain she did not. Was it after *Peter* and *John's* Return home? Εισηκει, *Had stood* can never mean that; which plainly refers to something preceding, and not subsequent to *Peter* and *John's* Return home from the Sepulchre; and therefore necessarily places the whole following History of *Christ's* Appearance to *Mary* before the going of the two Apostles to the Grave, and their Return home. I have accounted, p. 84, 85, 86. before for this Dislocation.

Objection III. Matthew says, the *Mary's* held *Jesus* by the Feet; *John* says, *Jesus* forbade *Mary* to touch him.

Answer. Therefore the two different Appearances referred to, are the same as above. Farther, if the
Maries

Maries *beld* Jesus *by the Feet*, there is no Reason to think that Jesus *forbid* Mary *to touch* him. Nor indeed, is there any Intimation in the History that he did. The Words * Μη μὲς ἀπτε, rendred in our Version, *Touch me not*, should have been rendred, *Embrace me no more*; and are a Prohibition, not to hinder her embracing him at all, but to prevent the longer Continuance of what she was actually doing. This appears plain from the Reason assigned: Οὐπω γὰρ † ἀναβέβηκα πρὸς τὸν πατέρα. *I am not yet ascended,*
OF,

* Ἀπτομαι, amongst many other Senses, is frequently used in that of *embracing*, and especially for Supplicants humbly embracing the Knees or Feet of their Superiors; and the Phrase here used is a *defective Form*: μη μὲς ἀπτε for μη μὲς ἀπτε γονάτων, or ποδῶν, *Embrace me not*, for *Embrace not my Knees or Feet*. Thus Homer; Δοασσάτο κερδίων εἶναι γένων ἀψάσθαι. *Odyf. X. v. 338, 339. He thought it best to touch, to embrace his Knees*, which Homer himself explains, v. 342. by λαβεῖ γένων, *he beld him by the Knees*. Thus also Euripides, *Hecub. v. 245. Ἡψω δὲ γονάτων, You embraced my Knees*; ἡψω τῆς ἐμῆς χειρὸς, *You beld my Hand*, v. 273. And what comes nearer to *John's* Expression of μη μὲς ἀπτε, is; Ἀψαι μᾶτρος, ἐκτεινὼν χεῖρα, v. 339. *Reach forth thy Hand and hold thy Mother*. Thus Cyrus, in his last Words to his Children and Friends, says: Εἰ τις ἐν ὑμῶν ἡ δεξιᾶς βλεπταί τῆς ἐμῆς ἀψάσθαι, *If any of you is desirous to take and kiss my Hand*, Xenoph. *Cyrop. p. 658. Edit. Hutch.* Other Instances may easily be mentioned.

† Οὐπω ἀναβέβηκα. These Words do not signify, *I am not yet ascended*, as our Translation renders them, but, *I do not yet ascend*. Thus the Word unquestionably signifies in another Place, *John iii. 13. Οὐδεὶς ἀναβέβηκε εἰς τὸν οὐρανόν, εἰ μὴ ὁ ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ καταβὰς*, which should be rendered: *No Man doth ascend into Heaven, but he who descended from Heaven*; and not as in our Version, *No Man hath ascended into Heaven, but he, &c.* a Version that intimates, that the Son of Man *had already ascended* into Heaven, for which there is no Foundation in the sacred Writings. The same Word, with a different Preposition, is used in a like Signification by Homer.

Κλυδί μιν Ἀργυροτόξ' ὅς Χρυσὴν ἀμφιβέβηκας. *Iliad. α. v. 37, 38.* where the learned Dr. *Clark's* Note is: *Tempus hoc non est, ut Vulgo vocant Grammatici, præteritum perfectum, sed præsens perfectum. "Qui tueris, qui circumstas." Who doest walk about, Who doest defend Chrysa.* And that this is the Meaning is evi-

or, as the Words will certainly bear rendring, *I do not yet ascend to my Father*; but go and tell my Brethren, || Αναβαινω εις τον πατερα μου, *I ascend to my Father*. I certainly and shortly shall do it. I do not see any great Difficulty in these Words. For as the former Part, *I have not yet ascended*, as it is in our Version, could not be for Mary's Information or Satisfaction, who then actually held him by the Feet, they must be understood in Connection with the latter. And the Sense of them will be: *Embrace me no longer. Go rather and tell my Disciples, that tho' I am risen, I do not yet ascend to my Father and leave them, so as that they shall see me*

dent, not only from the apparent Sense of the Place, but from what the Poet immediately adds

ΤΗΝΕΔΩΙΟ ΤΕ ΪΦΙ ΑΝΑΣΣΕΙΣ.

who art the mighty Sovereign of Tenedus. And thus in the Passage before us, επω αναβηκα. *I do not yet ascend*.

|| 'Tis not unusual to express that, which is shortly to be done, in the present Tense. Thus Christ says, Mar. ix. 31. *The Son of Man, παραδιδεται εις χειρας is delivered, i. e. shall be delivered into the Hands of Men*. Nor is this peculiar to the New Testament Writers. Thus Demosthenes, cont. Mid. p. 607. c. says of Midias: εστι δε πρωτον μεν εκεινο εκ αδηλος ερωτ. *In the first Place, I hear he says this, i. e. will plead it in his Defence*. And again, Id. ibid. p. 606. c. ων οσα αν οιος τε ω διεξειμι προς υμας αυτικα τε μαλα. Literally; *Which Things I now go through, as I am able, immediately, i. e. I will immediately do it, as I shall be able*. So Lucian, Philopseud. p. 39. l. 60. Edit. Wettsten. Ανδρα Βαβυλωνιον αυτικα μετειμι. *I immediately send for, i. e. I will immediately send for a certain Babylonian*. And again, Timon. p. 149. lin. 18, 19. Βουλει, Ο Τιμων, δικαιολογησομαι προς σε; η χαλεπαινεις μοι λεγοντι; *Shall I defend myself against you? or, Are you angry? i. e. Will you be angry with me if I speak?* Thus also Claudius, reproaching Appian, one of the Roman Decemviri, for his Tyranny, tells the Senate, εις Σαβεινους απειμι, Dion. Hal. p. 664. l. 48. *I go to the Sabines, i. e. I am determined shortly to do it*; an Expression almost parallel to that before us: Αναβαινω εις πατερα, *I ascend, I shortly shall ascend to my Father*. Since the writing of these Sheets, I have the Pleasure to find the learned Heinsius hath explain'd this whole Passage much in the same Manner I have, tho' without producing any Authorities. Vid. Hein. Aristarch. p. 959, 960.

no more ; but that I certainly and shortly do, or shall ascend to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God *. Christ had expressely foretold his own Ascension to Heaven. No one, says he, hath ascended, or no one ascends into Heaven, except it be he who descended from Heaven, the Son of Man who was in Heaven ; and more expressely in another Place : *Yet a little while and ye shall not see me, and yet again a little while and ye shall see me, because I go to the Father* †. So that the Message carried this double Comfort to the Apostles ; that Christ though risen, was not yet to ascend to the Father, and therefore they should see him for *some little while* ; but that he was soon to ascend to their common Father and God, and they might expect in Consequence of it, *the promised Comforter* ‖. This is the plain unforced meaning of the Words ; and all such sort of Objections as these : *If the Words, Touch me not, did not signify, Touch not my Body, what did they signify ? The Word me must mean his Person : If his Body had no relation to his Person, it was a Spirit : I say these, and the like learned Objections about me, and Touch, and Body, I shall leave wholly untouched, because 'tis in Truth the only Notice they deserve.* Farther,

Objection IV. Matthew says, that Jesus bad the Maries tell the Disciples, he was going to Galilee ; John says, that Jesus bad Mary tell the Disciples he was going to his Father.

Answer. These were two different Orders, deliver'd at the two different Appearances, as above ; so that as the Witnesses speak of two Appearances, one to Mary only, the other to Mary and her Companions ; as the last Appearance was in their way to the Disciples, and the first at the Sepulchre, before any

* John iii. 13.

† John xvi. 16.

‖ John xvi. 7.

of them had made their Report; as the Women *beld him* by the Feet when they saw him, and *Mary was forbid to hold him* any longer when he appeared to her; and as the two *different Messages*, relating to *Galilee* and *Heaven*, were deliver'd to different Persons, and at different Times; the Witnesses are abundantly consistent, and deserve to be credited.

Matthew, Mark and John, not only agree that *Mary Magdalene* saw *Jesus*; but *Matthew* and *John* agree that the Women and *Mary* made their Report of what they had seen to the Disciples. *Mark* says expressly, *Christ first appear'd to Mary*, and with him *John* perfectly agrees, who places the Appearance to *Mary*, whilst she was at the Sepulchre, and before she return'd Home with her Companions. *Matthew, Mark and John*, compared together, demonstrate *two Appearances to Mary*, the first to her *singly*, the latter to her *and her Companions*; and therefore 'tis not *Necessity*, any other than that *irresistible Necessity* of Fact, and the strongest Circumstances, *that drives us to assert two Appearances*, which removes all Absurdity from the Account, and justifies the whole without receding one tittle from the Letter of the History.

'Tis farther urged, that *Luke, who gives a particular Account of the Women, and what passed between them and the Angels*, says ver. 23. that his Body they found not; but if they had seen him alive or dead, they must have found or seen his Body; therefore according to *Luke* they saw him not. I answer, that tho' *Luke* doth say, *they found not his Body*, yet *Luke* confines it to his *dead Body*; because he adds in the same Verse, that they affirmed they had seen a *Vision of Angels, which said that he was alive*; urging his *very being alive*, as the reason why they saw not his Body. As therefore *Luke* only asserts, that they found not his *dead Body*, but no where asserts

ferts that *they did not see his living Body*; nothing can be inferred from *Luke*, that *they saw him not at all*. And tho' *Luke* doth not mention the Appearances of Christ first to *Mary*, and then to *Mary* and her Companions, all that I know that can follow from it is; not that *Luke* denies what the other Historians affirm, but that his Information *was not so exact*, and full as theirs. And of this Concession let every one make the most he can. If *Luke* received his Information from *Peter*, or his particular Friends, the Reason of *Luke's* Omission of these Appearances is evident; because, as hath been observed, *Peter* seems to have ran to the Sepulchre, before *Mary* had enter'd into this Part of her Narration, to see what was become of the dead Body; and not having himself heard the Report of the Resurrection when first given, he might not think it necessary to relate it to others. But whatever was the Reason of the Omission, 'tis not necessary to enquire. Farther,

'Tis affirmed, that *by Luke it appears, that the Men were at the Sepulchre, after the Angels were gone; but by John, that they were there before the Angels came*. This hath been already accounted for, by reducing *the disjointed Parts* of the Relation to their proper Order, and accounting for *the Dislocation*; and tho' *John* says rightly, that after *Mary* had affirmed the Body of Christ was removed, *Peter* and the other Disciple went immediately to the Sepulchre, yet he no where intimates or says, that their going to the Sepulchre was before the Angels came; but, as hath been shewn, uses an Expression that intimates the contrary.

And finally when 'tis said, that *this Appearance of Jesus to Mary Magdalene, deliver'd in our Gospels, the Disciples themselves did not believe, nor indeed that they saw Angels*: I readily allow it, because they had no Notion that the *Messiah* or *Christ* was to die, or to rise again; and therefore 'twas no Wonder,

they should not believe the first Accounts of his Resurrection. And this their Backwardness to believe so extraordinary an Event, is a just Reason to suppose, they would not be easily imposed on in it; and that their *After-belief* of it was owing to the fullest Conviction, and to such strong Evidence as it was not in their Power to resist. The first Beginning of *Peter's* Conviction was, his finding *Mary's* Report true, that the dead Body of Christ was not in the Sepulchre, on which he *wondred in himself at what was come to pass* *. But he soon had the strongest Proof of his Master's real Resurrection, that his Heart could desire; since Christ actually appear'd to him.

III. Appearance of CHRIST.

Luke xxiv. 34.

1 Cor. xv. 5.

*The Lord is
risen indeed, and
hath appeared to
Simon.*

*He was seen
of Cephas.*

I place this Appearance next in Order, because it was certain that it was on the Day of Christ's Resurrection, and because *St. Paul* mentions it as one of the earliest; placing it *the very first* of those, that he mentions to the *Corinthians*; and because when the two Disciples that were walking to *Emmaus*, came to the Apostles, to assure them they had seen *Jesus*, the Apostles prevented their Relation, by first telling them, that *the Lord was risen*. They found *συνηθροισμενους τας ενδεκα — λεγοντας*, the Eleven gathered together, and those that were with them, who said, *the Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared to Simon*; whom we know by *St. Paul* to have been *Cephas*, or *Simon Peter* the Apostle. After this

* Luke xxiv. 12.

IV. Appearance of CHRIST.

Mark xvi. 12.

*He appeared
in another Form
unto two of them,
as they walked
and went into the
Country.*

Luke xxiv.

13—15.

*Behold two of
them went that
same Day to a
Village called
Emmaus — Je-
sus himself drew
near and went
with them.*

In this Appearance of Christ there are several Circumstances remarkable, and that are thought liable to Objection.

'Tis supposed by some, that *the two Persons spoken of, were Cleopas and Simon, i. e. Peter the Apostle, because Paul says, that he was seen of Cephas; and they, viz. the two Disciples reported, that the Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared to Simon.* But 'tis certain from this very Place of *Luke* that *Peter* was not one of these two Disciples to whom Christ appeared; *λεγοντες* belongs not to the two Disciples, by the very Construction, but to the Apostles or some that were with them; and instead of these two telling the Apostles, that Christ had appeared to *Simon*, the Apostles, or some of their Company, told this good News to these two Disciples. Besides *Luke* expressly says *, that these two Disciples *returned to Jerusalem, and found the Eleven gathered together; and therefore as Peter was one of that Eleven, he could not be one of the two that came from Emmaus, and found Peter at Jerusalem.* Hence, the Objection, *that Simon Peter, who seems to be one of the two, who knew him perfectly well before his Death, should not know him as well afterwards,* is all impertinent;

* *Luke xxiv. 33.*

because

because the Supposition, that is to support this Reasoning, *viz. that Peter was one of the two*, is evidently false. In like manner, when 'tis said: *They reported that the Lord — bath appeared to Simon, and that this seems to intimate as if he did not appear to Cleopas, but to Simon only*; 'tis just as much to the Purpose as the former; because, *They reported*, is not spoken of *the two Disciples*, but of the Eleven Apostles, or some of those who were with them, who related to these two an Appearance to *Simon*, in which they were not concerned.

When he first appeared to these two Disciples, *Luke* expressly tells us *, that *they did not know him*; adding the Reason: *Their Eyes were holden*, that they should not know him; and I think *Mark* † explains this Reason, by telling us, *that he appeared to them in another Form*; which Form, different from what they had ever seen him in before, held their Eyes that they should not know him. What is precisely meant by this *different Form*, may not be so easy to determine, nor whether the Evangelist means, a different Form from what he appeared in to *Mary Magdalene*, or from what these two Disciples had ever seen him in before. The Word *μορφη* || denotes the whole external Form, as appearing to the Eye, both of Countenance and Habit. Probably both are included. As his Habit was different from what he wore before, so his Countenance might be *wan and pale*, from his Crucifixion, Pain, loss of

* *Luke* xxiv. 16.

† *Mark* xvi. 12.

|| Thus the Priest of *Saturn* describes the Appearance of his God, *αρπην ειχε πανν τεθηγμενην ταδ' αλλα, φαιδρος τε ην κ' καρπερος, κ' βασιλικως ενεσκευασα. Μορphen μεν τοιοσδε ωφθη μοι*. He had a very sharp Scythe, a chearful Face, a robust Complexion, and a royal Habit. This was the Form in which he appeared to me, *Lucian. Saturn. p. 393. l. 37. &c.* Sometimes it denotes the Appearance of the Countenance principally, and sometimes of the Dress and Habit especially. See *Sophoc. Elect. v. 1263, 1264, and Philoct. v. 130.*

Blood, and lying dead in his Grave. Add to this, their deep Concern for Christ's Crucifixion and Death, the sudden Appearance, unthought of, and unexpected by them in their way, his joining them as a Traveller, the Nature and Eagerness of the Discourse, and their not being of his Twelve Disciples, and not so well and thoroughly acquainted with his Manner, Person, and Voice; and lastly, its being towards Evening, and the Day well spent: Take in all these Circumstances, and I think their not knowing him was *quite a natural Thing*, and needs no extraordinary Miracle to account for it. Hence the Assertion, *that whatever Form it was, if it was his real Person that appeared, the Form of that Person was the same*, is without any Probability or Foundation of Truth; and therefore when 'tis objected, *that if his Countenance was altered, 'tis very strange that the Power which raised him from the dead, that he might be known, should alter the Form of his Face and Person that he might not be known*, 'tis wholly impertinent; because there appears no Alteration by a superior Power; but such an Alteration only, as was naturally to be expected from his sufferings, Death and Burial. And when 'tis farther represented, as *strange, that the Power which raised him again to Life, should not restore his Complexion, that those might know him, to whom he appear'd to be known*: I answer, had his Countenance been thus restored, the Apostles themselves might have had *greater Reason* to suspect, whether it was Jesus himself or no: At least, I imagine that our modern Unbelievers would have objected from hence, that he was *never dead*; and have argued, how unlikely it was, that one just crucified and come out of his Grave, should upon his first Revival, appear with a Complexion and Countenance, that argued *perfect Health* and Vigour. When any Thing is effected by a Divine Power, to complain,

why was it not done after this and the other manner ; or to argue that nothing is effected by the Divine Power, that is not done just as we would have it, or that is liable to any Exceptions in any Circumstances ; appears to me extremely unreasonable and unbecoming. I shall only add, that as there were many Circumstances, that might thus naturally hinder these two Disciples from knowing him, even *tho' they were talking with him* ; so this very Circumstance itself might help to prevent it ; for they were talking of one *just crucified*, and whom they thought *now dead*, and whom they never expected to see raised from the dead ; and therefore could never imagine they were talking with *that individual Person restored to Life* ; so that *their Eyes might well be withheld* from immediately knowing him.

But the Insinuation that *Christ came to make himself known to them in such a manner, that they should not know him*, is contrary to Fact ; for it doth not appear that that different Form, in which they saw him, was in the least put on to conceal himself from them, and *tho' they did not know him at first*, yet Christ took the most effectual Method to convince them who he was ; first by convincing them, that according to the Scripture Predictions, the Messiah *was first to suffer and then to enter into his Glory* ; and then by taking a proper Opportunity to convince them by their Eye-sight, that he himself was risen from the Dead according to those Prophecies ; so that even the very Circumstance of their not knowing him, was *highly improved* to their Benefit, and made the Occasion of their being more *abundantly confirmed* as to the Certainty of his Resurrection. And this is a good Reason, *why Jesus did not discover himself to them by the way, and give them the Joy which that Discovery would have made*. But how ridiculous is the Question itself? *Can any good Reason be given, why*

why he did not discover himself by the way? Why by the way? What was there essential in that? Was the Place where, necessary to their Conviction? And can any good Reason be given why he should discover himself to them by the way, rather than in the House?

But what was the manner of it? After he had expounded the Scriptures, in Reference to the *Sufferings and Glory* of the *Messiah*, the Day being declined and the Evening drawing on, *he staid, and sat down at Supper with them*; and began it by taking Bread, and blessing it, and breaking and giving it to them. The Solemnity of the Action, and probably the very *Words of the Benediction*, which they had heard him pronounce before on like Occasions, at once fixed all their Attention, and casting their Eyes *fully on him*, they immediately knew him. Thus were, I apprehend, *their Eyes opened*; and notwithstanding all their Prejudices against believing his Resurrection, they could not now withstand the *full Conviction* of the Fact. Nor do I see any Circumstance in the Narration, that is incredible in its Nature, or, that, all Things put together, may not be accounted for upon ordinary and common Principles.

But we are asked, *How can we be sure, they did not mistake at last, and thought it was Jesus when it was not? What Proof had they, or do they give us of it?* I answer, we may be as sure they did not mistake him, as we can be that *their Eyes were opened*. That the two Disciples, *in their Circumstances*, might not immediately know Christ, is a Thing perfectly natural to suppose; just as natural as 'tis to suppose, that a Man, who had two or three Days ago buried his Friend, without even the least Apprehension of his ever rising again, might not immediately recollect him, if really risen and conversing with him; and especially if in any Circumstances altered from his usual Appearance,

ance, by his Sicknefs and Death. And yet 'tis as natural to fuppose, that upon longer Converfe with him, a more attentive beholding him, his putting him in mind of former Conversations, and repeating some remarkable Actions or Words, that were peculiar to him when living, he might at length fully recollect him, and be as sure that it was he, and no other, as he could be sure, that his Ears and and his Eyes did not deceive him. The two Disciples had the Testimony of both; and if any are not satisfied with it, it will become them to prove, that their Ears were deaf, and their Eyes *still* *holden*, or that the Historian hath given a false Account of the Conversation and Discovery.

We are farther asked, *Is it proper to call these Eye-Witnesses, that could not see clearly by Day-light?* But how is it known, what Time of the Day 'twas? I greatly question whether it was *full Day-light*, as is imagined. But supposing 'twas, the Circumstances before-mentioned will account for their *not immediately knowing* him; and I think 'tis more probable in the Nature of the Thing, that when they were in the same Room, sitting down together, and eating with one another, and so more capable of taking a fuller view of him, they should be more likely to know him, than whilst they were only walking together, when their view of him was transient, and their Minds engaged in a Conversation, that took up all their Attention. So that the Questions which are thought so difficult, may be fairly answered: *If they saw thro' a false Medium at first, how do we know but they did the same at last? Are these Persons fit to be depended on as Eye-Witnesses, whose Eyes could be deceived? What sort of Witnesses are these? Eye-Witnesses?* Yes. Before Supper, whilst conversing by the way, they did not *indeed* apprehend him to be Christ, as thinking him *irrecoverably dead*; and till such Conviction, tho' they saw him, they

they could not have been proper Witnesses to his Resurrection. But is it impossible to be undeceived? Supposing Christ to have been really the Person they were talking with, was there no Method to convince them that 'twas himself? If convinced at last, by full Demonstration of their Eyes, are they *ever the worse Eye-Witnesses* after that Conviction, because there were certain Circumstances that prevented their knowing him before? This in many Cases would be regarded *as a corroborating Circumstance* in the Evidence, and considered as a real Proof of the Integrity and Credibility of the Witnesses.

But 'tis said, that *when they thought it was Christ, he disappeared*. And what good Reason can be given, why he should stay longer than was necessary fully to convince them? 'Tis urged, that Jesus *should have staid long enough to make them sufficiently sensible by such Demonstration, as that their Report of it might convince the other Disciples*. But if Christ gave them such sensible Demonstration as fully convinced the two Disciples he appeared to, then the principal End of that Appearance was answered, and there is no Probability that he intended to convince the other Disciples by their Report only, because probably their single Report would never have fully convinced them. For had the Demonstration been ever so full to these two Disciples, that Demonstration could never have been made known to the rest, but by Report; and we find that they were too incredulous to be thus convinced, and that nothing less would satisfy them, than the fullest Demonstration of their own Senses. Jesus intended, that the Conviction of all his Apostles and Disciples should be gradual, and that one Appearance should prepare the Way for another. Each succeeding one was a Confirmation of the foregoing, and all together amount to a Proof, as strong and full as can be reasonably desired. 'Tis true, the Report
of

of these two did not fully convince all the Eleven Apostles, and other Disciples, as *Mark* expressly informs us; but yet it appears from *Luke*, that when these two Disciples came to the Apostles, and those who were with them, to report to them what they had seen, and the Manner of *Christ's* discovering himself to them; they were told by some of the Company, what *Peter* had assured them of, viz. that * *the Lord was really risen, and had appeared to Peter*. So that the Belief of the Resurrection began to gain Ground, tho' the Conviction amongst those who had not seen him since his Resurrection, was far from being so full, as to exclude all Suspicion and Doubt of the contrary. Upon the whole:

As *Christ's* Stay with these two Disciples was long enough for their Instruction in some of the most important Prophecies of Scripture, and for their entire Conviction of the Reality of his Resurrection, so there is one plain Reason of his suddain leaving them; because he soon intended to give the rest of his Disciples the same Demonstration and Conviction of his Resurrection, by personally appearing to them all. 'Tis allowed that *a wise and good Being always proposes some wise and good End to be answered*. And if to convince those he appeared to, that his Resurrection was real, be a wise and good End, the wise and good End that *Christ* proposed by his Appearance is visible enough; and if his immediately leaving them after that Conviction, was necessary to his giving others the same Conviction, then his leaving them was to answer as wise and good an End as the former.

But 'tis objected: *All the Knowledge they pretend to of him was but little, and staid but a little while; a little Matter confounded it*. But how is all this known? Whence comes this Intelligence? The

* *Luke* xxiv. 34.

History here happens to be against it, and assures us of their full Satisfaction in the Case, that their Knowledge staid with them, and that neither a little while, nor a little Matter confounded it. For as soon as ever Christ was gone, they said one to another: * *Did not our Heart burn within us, as he talked to us by the Way, and as he opened to us the Scriptures? And that same Hour they returned to Jerusalem, and declared the Things that happened to them in the Way, and how he was known of them in breaking of Bread.* So that their Knowledge was satisfactory and abiding.

But it seems, as soon as they knew, or thought they knew him, he instantly disappeared, and they lost him again. Jesus was gone, and they knew not how, nor where. Is this a real Proof? Or a Proof of a real Body? But if this be any thing of a real Objection, 'tis founded upon the injudicious Version of our Translators, who have rendred the Words *αφαντος εγενετο*, *He vanished out of their Sight*; which they might as well have rendred: *He fled away out of their Sight.* The Word properly signifies, he suddainly went away, or disappear'd, by what Means soever that happened. † *Anacreon* speaking of the Flight

* *Luke* xxiv. 32 — 8.

† *Χειμωνι δ' εις αφαντος*

Η Νειλον η πι Μεμφιν.

Ode 33. v. 4, 5.

In like Manner *Pindar* uses the same Word of *Pelops*, suddainly snatched away by *Neptune*: *Ως δ' αφαντος επελες.* As soon as you disappeared; without any Imagination that *Pelops* had no real Body. *Pind. Olymp. α. v. 72.* where the Scholiast explains it by: *Ως δε αφανης εγενε, when you was no longer to be seen.* Thus also *Hesychius.* *Αφαντον. Αφανες, αδεωρητον, μη φαινομενον.* *Αφαντον* signifies what is not visible, what is not seen, what doth not appear. Hence 'tis used of a Person who wholly disappears by a suddain and violent Death.

— *αλλ' αμα παντες*

Ιωβ εξαπολοιαν, ακηδετοι κ' αφαντοι. *Hom. Iliad. ζ. v. 60.*

Not one of all the Race, nor Sex, nor Age,
Shall save a Trojan from our boundless Rage.

Ilion shall perish whole, and bury all,

Pope.
of

of the Swallow, tells us, in the very same Word the Evangelist uses, that *in the Winter he disappears*, and goes to the *Nile and Memphis*. How pertinent now would the Question be in Reference to these Swallows: *They give us the Slip, and we lose them again. They are gone we know not how, nor where. Is this a real Proof that we ever saw them? Or a Proof that they have a real Body?* The Meaning of the Expression in the Place before us, is, that he took an Opportunity, and suddainly, almost unobserved, departed from them, so that they no longer saw him. And is this such an Impossibility? Such an Inconsistency with the Proof of a real Body? Or will any one assert, that nothing that *suddainly disappears* can be truly corporeal? Read but the Account of this Appearance, with the same Candour, and Willingness to account for Difficulties, as we ought to do by other Authors, and the whole will carry the strongest Probability; and there will no Objections arise, but what may fairly and easily be accounted for. I know indeed that a Man, who thinks the Resurrection impossible, and that 'tis above the Power of God to effect it, will never be satisfied with the Accounts we have of these Appearances of *Christ*. And if this is his fixed Principle, no Account whatsoever could possibly give him Satisfaction. His Infidelity would start Objections for ever, and the *How can these Things be*, weigh down all possible Proof and Demonstration of them. But Saint *Paul's* Question I have never yet seen fairly answered. *Why should it be thought a Thing impossible for God to raise the Dead?* Supposing the Possibility of this Truth, and taking in the great Ends the Resurrection of *Christ* answers in the Christian Scheme; the Event itself, how surprizing soever it may appear, will be found no more than suitable to the great Intentions of Providence to be carried on by it, and the Proofs of the Reality of
it

it will be more easily admitted, and seen in a stronger and more convincing Light. But to proceed to the next Appearance, which is thus recorded by two of the Evangelists :

V. Appearance
of CHRIST.

Luke xxiv.

36—40.

As they thus speak, viz. the two Disciples, Jesus himself stood in the midst of them, and said unto them: Peace be unto you. But they were terrified and affrighted, and supposed that they had seen a Spirit. And he said unto them: Why are ye troubled, and why do Thoughts arise in your Minds? Behold my Hands and my Feet, that it is I myself. Handle me, and see me, for a Spirit hath not Flesh and Bones as ye see me have; and -- he shewed them his Hands and his Feet.

John xx.

19—24.

The same Day, at Even, being the first Day of the Week, when the Doors were shut, where the Disciples were assembled, for Fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the Midst, and said unto them: Peace be unto you. And when he had so said, he shewed unto them his Hands and Side. — But Thomas, one of the Twelve, called Didymus, was not with them when Jesus came.

It is evident these two Accounts relate to the same Appearance. *Luke* places it on the same Day on which he appeared to the two Disciples, and says that 'twas the Day of the Resurrection; and *John*, that it was on the first Day of the Week. *John* says it was the Evening of that Day; and *Luke* says, that *Christ*, and the two Disciples, did not sit down to Supper 'till 'twas near Evening, and this Appearance was not 'till after this, and their Return from *Emmaus* to *Jerusalem*. Both relate, that *Christ* gave them full Conviction that it was himself, by shewing them the Parts of his Body that had been wounded, and *Luke* assures us, that he eat before them. They both of them seem to represent, that the Manner of his Appearance surprized and frighten'd the Disciples. *John* says, that the Disciples were gathered together in a Room or House, *with the Doors shut, for Fear of the Jews*, and that *Jesus came and stood in the midst of them*, viz. suddain and unexpected. *Luke* says, that *he stood in the midst of them*, and that the Disciples, when they saw him, *were terrified*, and imagined *they had seen a Spirit*; viz. thinking him dead, and never expecting him to rise, and yet seeing him appear in the midst of them, they concluded it not to be himself really, but *his Apparition*; 'till our blessed Saviour abundantly convinced them, by the fullest Demonstration, to the contrary.

There are two *Appearances* of Difficulty in these Accounts. The one, that *Luke* says, that the two Disciples *returned to Jerusalem, and found the Eleven gathered together*, and made their Report to them of what they had seen; and that just as they had given their Account, *Jesus stood in the midst of them*; whereas *John* expressly affirms, that when *Jesus* came, *Thomas*, called *Didymus*, one of the Apostles, *was not present*. But I cannot, for my Life, see any Inconsistency in these Accounts. *Luke* says, the
two

two Disciples found the Eleven together, and related to them the Account of what they had seen and heard. But where doth *Luke* say, that *Thomas* was there when *Christ* came? Why cannot a candid Mind suppose, that *Thomas* looked upon their Report as an incredible Tale, and had not Patience to stay to hear it quite out; and so was absent at the Appearance, as *John* relates it? To suppose this of *Thomas* is quite agreeable to his Character, who seems to have been more incredulous than the rest of his Brethren. If therefore both these Relations may be true, and if one natural and easy Supposition will reconcile them; why should we not act by *Luke* and *John*, as we would by any two other Authors of Consequence, allow them to be consistent, when we have it so readily in our Power to make them so.

But even supposing that *Thomas* was not at all present, why may not *Luke* be allowed the same Liberty with other Writers, viz. that of calling the Apostles *Τὰς ενδεκα*, or *The Eleven*, tho' one of that Number was absent? 'Tis evident they are distinguished by this Name from the other Disciples. See *Mat.* xxviii. 16. *Mar.* xvi. 14. *Luk.* xxiv. 9. and may therefore, with the same Propriety, any Number of them, be described by this Name of *the Eleven*, by the sacred Writers, as other Writers may take the same or a like Liberty. * *Grotius* hath observed, that *Xenophon* calls the Governors of *Athens* by the Name of *Τριανοντα*, *The Thirty*, when *Theramenes*, one of them, was dead; and that in the Book of Judges, the *Seventy Sons* of *Gideon* are said to be slain, whilst *Jotham*, one of them was alive. I add, that *Livy* † calls by the Name of *Decemviri*, or, *The ten Men*, only five of them, who had the joint Command of the Roman Army in *Tusculum*; and a little after ‡ he gives the same Name only to

* *Grot.* in *Johan.* 20. 24.

† *Histor.* l. 3. c. 43.

‡ *Ibid.* et l. 3. c. 51.

three of them, who had the joint Command of the Army against the *Sabines*; and even * to those two of them, who were left at *Rome*, to take Care of the City. In like Manner, *Dionysius Halicarnassensis* † tells us, that when *L. Valerius* called upon *Fabius*, one of the *Decemviri*, to assist in restoring the Liberties of his Country, *Fabius* was ashamed, and made no Reply; but that *Appius*, another of them, και οι λοιποι δεινα, and the other Ten, forbid *Valerius* to proceed; thereby giving the Name of *the Ten* to *Eight* of them only. Now how unreasonable is it to charge that as a Contradiction on the sacred Writers, which no one ever charged as a Contradiction on others? But I have long since learnt, that the Opposers of Revelation are not over-burthen'd either with Candor or Learning, and that Christianity is not to expect a very fair and equitable Treatment from them.

It hath also been counted a Difficulty in this Appearance of *Christ*, the Manner in which he is represented as coming amongst them. *Luke* says, that the Apostles and Disciples ‡ were terrified, and thought they saw a Spirit. But there is no Reason to think that the Cause of their Terror arose from the Manner of his Appearance, but the Appearance itself. They thought him actually dead, and in Consequence of that Apprehension, could not but be surprized when they first saw him, and look on it as his Apparition, rather than himself. And from this Passage, and another in || *John*, where he says: That the Doors being shut, *Jesus came and stood in the midst of them*, the *Lutheran* Divines argue the Spirituality of *Christ's* Body after his Resurrection. But I think there is no Part of the History justifies this Notion, and some Part of it directly contradicts it. For

* *Histor. c. 49. lin. 20.*

† *Antiq. l. 11. p. 657. lin. 17, 18.*

‡ *Luke xxiv. 37.*

|| *Vid. Wolf. Cur. ad Joh. xx 19. 26.*

tho' the Disciples thought they had seen an Apparition, or spiritual Appearance, yet Christ immediately undeceived them, by saying to them: *Why are ye disturbed, and why do Reasonings arise in your Hearts? See my Hands and my Feet, that I am my very self. Handle me and see, for a Spirit hath not Flesh and Bones, as ye see me have.* Christ's Body therefore was real, and composed of Flesh and Bones, after, as well as before his Resurrection. And this I think will plainly account for the Passage in *John*; who tells us, that as *it was Evening on the first Day of the Week, and the Doors shut where the Disciples were gathered together, thro' fear of the Jews, Jesus came, and stood in the midst.* Suppose this had been said of any other living Person, that tho' the Doors were shut in a certain Room, where several Persons were met together, he came into the midst of them suddenly, and spoke to them; would not any one immediately conclude, that he found some way or other to open the Doors and procure himself Admittance? Would any one imagine, that because his coming was sudden and unexpected, he slipped in by a Miracle, whilst the Doors remain'd shut against him? Why then should the same unreasonable Supposition be made here, when there is not the least Foundation for it in the History? The Circumstance of *the Doors being shut*, is mentioned only to shew the fear of the Disciples, and their Desire of being concealed from their Enemies; and to let us know at the same Time, that neither the Darknes of the Evening, nor all their Care to conceal themselves from others, were able to prevent him from finding them out, and giving them the full Satisfaction that he was risen from the Dead. If any one should be disposed farther to ask, *how he opened the Doors*, I promise to give them full Satisfaction, when they

* *Luke xxiv. 38, 39.*

can inform me *how they were shut*. But to proceed to the next Appearance, which is recorded by *Mark* and *John*.

VI. Appearance
of CHRIST.

Mark xvi. 14.

Afterwards, he appeared to the Eleven, as they sat at Meat, and upbraided them with their Unbelief, and hardness of Heart, because they believed not them which had seen him after he was risen.

John xx.

16—29.

After eight days again his Disciples were within, and Thomas with them. Then came Jesus, the Doors being shut, and stood in the midst of them, and said: Peace be unto you. Then said he to Thomas: Reach hither thy Finger, and behold my Hands; and reach hither thy Hand, and thrust it into my Side, and be not faithless but believing — Thomas because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed. Blessed are they, that have not seen, and yet have believed.

I think these two Passages are parallel, and relate entirely to the same Event; because *Mark* expressly mentions that Christ appeared to the Eleven, and
John

John intimates the same, saying *his Disciples were within, and Thomas with them.* Both the Evangelists also agree, that when Christ appeared to them, *he gently reproached them for their Unbelief.* *Mark* says, *he upbraided them because they believed not those who had seen him after he was risen.* *John* tells us, that he particularly reproached *Thomas.* *Be not faithless but believing. Because thou hast seen thou hast believed.* Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed; Words that carried in them a kind *Reproof* to all the rest of the Apostles. In neither of the Evangelists is there any mention of their being terrified, as in the foregoing Appearance, for this plain Reason; because they had once before seen him enter in *like manner*; and had then received full Satisfaction that it was Christ himself. *Mark* says, that he now appeared *as they sat at Meat.* *Luke* says not one Word of this, in the Appearance which he relates, but intimates the contrary. For *Jesus* asked them: *Have ye here any Meat?* A Question not likely to have been asked, had they been actually sitting at Meat. So that I think no Doubt can be made, but that *Mark* relates the same Appearance as *John*, viz. that made to all the Apostles, when *Thomas* was with them. 'Tis observable also, that tho' *Luke* and *John* expressly confine the former Appearance to the Day on which he rose from the dead; *Mark* gives not the least Intimation of this, but only says, *μετῶν, afterwards, or some Time after*, as that Word frequently signifies; and which unquestionably may with equal Propriety, at least, denote *Afterwards, at the Distance of eight Days*, as well as *afterwards on the Evening of one and the same Day.*

And this Observation will obviate all that is objected against the Consistency of the Apostles Testimony.

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'Tis said that *Matthew, Mark and Luke agree, that when the Disciples were made acquainted with the Resurrection of Jesus, they met him for the first and the last Time. But this St. John, the Author of the Acts, and St. Paul contradict, for they tell us of other Appearances afterwards.*

I answer. Neither of the Three Evangelists says, that *the Disciples met Jesus for the first and last Time, when they were made acquainted with his Resurrection.* *Matthew* mentions only the Appearance to the Apostles in *Galilee*, but doth not say one Word whether 'twas first or last. *Mark* mentions, only that Appearance to the Eleven, made when *Thomas* was with them; but leaves the Thing absolutely undetermined, how often and where he was seen of them, and conversed with them; only saying in general: *So then after the Lord had spoken to them; without any Particle or Word to restrain this Expression to the Conversation with the Apostles immediately before related.* In like manner *Luke* relates, only the Appearance to the Ten Apostles on the Day of the Resurrection, and then subjoins the Account of another Conversation Christ had with them, just before his Resurrection, which was probably in *Jerusalem*; for *Luke* adds: *He led them out as far as Bethany **, which was about Two Miles distance from that City. The Account of the first Appearance to the Ten Apostles, and of what *Jesus* said and did to them, mentioned by *Luke*, ends at Verse 43d: *And he took it and did eat before them.* The Words immediately following, *εἰπε δὲ αὐτοῖς, Moreover he said to them*, relate to an Appearance Forty Days after, on the Day of his Ascension; as will be I think evident to any one, who compares this Place in *Luke*, with that in the *Acts* i. 4, &c. which shall both be considered immediately. And from

* John xi. 18.

hence I think there can be no doubt, but that *Luke* and the Author of the *Acts*, speak of one and the same Appearance in these Places; and therefore *Luke* is so far from making the first Time of Christ's appearing to his Disciples, to acquaint them with his Resurrection, to be the first and the last, that in reality he mentions two distinct Appearances and Conversations, at the Distance of about Forty Days from each other; one the very Day of his Resurrection, the other Ten Days only before his Ascension. The Evangelists therefore do not in the least contradict each other, as to the Number of Christ's Appearances, tho' they do not all of them join in relating the very same.

'Tis objected farther: *Matthew and Mark say, the Disciples had Orders to meet Jesus in Galilee; but Luke, and the Author of the Acts say, that the Disciples had Orders not to depart from Jerusalem.*

Answer. Both these Orders are reconcilable, being given at different Times; that *to go into Galilee*, being given on the Day of the Resurrection, and obeyed by the Apostles, as both *Matthew* and *John* assure us; that *not to depart from Jerusalem*, being given after the return from Galilee, about Forty Days after the first.

Again. 'Tis said, *Matthew disagrees with Luke, both as to Time and Place, as to this last mentioned Appearance; for Matthew says, it was at a Mountain in Galilee. Luke says at Jerusalem. Luke places it on the Evening of the Resurrection-Day; but as Galilee was Threescore Miles from Jerusalem, the Appearance could not be on the Resurrection-Evening, according to Matthew.*

Answer. This is confounding different Appearances, and the Inconsistency is not in *Matthew* and *Luke*, but in the Objectors. When 'tis said, that the Author of the *Acts* says that Jesus was with the Apostles forty Days, *Luke* only one Day; my Answer

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is, that this is not true; for *Luke* no where says, he was with them one Day only, but plainly intimates the contrary, as hath been just shewn; and therefore, as the Author of the *Acts* doth not contradict *Luke*, *Luke* may still be the very individual Writer of those *Acts*.

Again. 'Tis said, *John* disagrees with the other Three, in not making this last mentioned Appearance, the last and only one to the Apostles.

Answer. None of the Three say this was the last and only one, as hath been proved; therefore *John* doth not disagree with them.

Again. The Three say that the Eleven were gathered together at this Appearance. *John* says, *Thomas*, one of them, was missing.

Answer. Not one of them say the Eleven were actually present at the Appearance on the Evening of the Resurrection-Day. *Mark*, as hath been shewn, plainly speaks of a different Appearance. *Luke* only says, that the Eleven were together when the two Disciples made their Report, but doth not say, they were all together when Christ came into the midst of them. *Matthew* hath not one Word about it.

Again. *John's* saying, that *Thomas* declared he would not believe, except he saw the Print of the Nails in his Hands, and felt the Wound in his Side, contradicts the Evidence of the others.

Answer. -What have they said in Evidence, to which this is a Contradiction?

Again. *John* says, that *Jesus* bade *Thomas* feel his Hands and his Side, and believe, which we do not read that *Thomas* did, but believed on Sight.

Answer. Where do we read *Thomas* believed on Sight? If he did, 'twas because his Conviction without feeling was too strong to be resisted. * *John*

* 1 John i. 1.

however plainly intimates the contrary, when he tells, us, speaking of himself and the other Apostles: *That we have heard, and seen with our Eyes, and our Hands have handled the Word of Life, or the Living Word.* The Case of *Thomas* was this. Despairing absolutely of the Resurrection of Christ, upon being told by the others that they had actually seen him, and probably that he had shewn them his Hands, and Side, and Feet, he cries out as thinking them under a strong Delusion, that seeing would not satisfy him; but that *except he saw in his Hands the Print of the Nails, and put his Finger into the Print of his Nails; and thrust his Hand into his Side, he would not believe.* What *Thomas* therefore wanted, was the Demonstration of *feeling*, as well as *seeing*. If the Eyes might be imposed on by an Apparition, in the Form and Figure of Christ, yet if he saw this Form and Figure, and found by his feeling that 'twas a real Person who sustained it, having a proper *substantial Body*; if he not only saw the Appearance of the Wounds, but actually *felt the Print*, the Marks and Scars of them; this was the Evidence he thought necessary on so important an Occasion, and which he actually demanded, as necessary to his full Conviction. It is therefore an admirable Question we are ask'd, on this Head: *Could not another Person, who might have a Mind to deceive, make Scars in those Places, or the Appearance of such Wounds?* The Resolution of this Difficulty I leave to the more learned, who are better able to say, whether such Wounds, as are necessary to leave deep Scars behind them, are capable of being made, or cured in Eight and Forty Hours Time. I only observe, that when the Objection speaks of *the Appearance of such Wounds*, 'tis forgot that *Thomas* was to feel and not to see, and that he did not want to *feel the Appearance*, but the real Marks of the Wounds in Christ's Body. And tho' the Appearance

ance of Christ in his proper Person might have reasonably satisfied him of his real Resurrection, yet the Conviction that arose from handling and feeling his Body heightened the Evidence, and rendred any Deception or Imposture impossible.

But had Christ any Mark in his Side? *John* indeed says, *that one of the Soldiers pierced the Side of Christ with a Spear*; but no other Evangelist reports it but he. What then? *John* was an Eye-Witness to the Fact, and capable of relating what he saw. Nor can I see what End *John* could answer by forging this Fact, and spreading it about, if 'twas really a Falshood. Both Friends and Enemies agreed that he was put to Death. This wanted no Proof on either Side. *Mark* tells us, that when *Joseph* went to *Pilate* to demand the Body of *Jesus*, *Pilate wondred that he should be already dead*; and that to prevent his being imposed on, by any of the Friends and Disciples of *Jesus*, he sent for the Centurion and demanded of him, *if he had been any while Dead?* And having been informed by the Centurion that he had, he gave the Body to *Joseph*. An Evidence this, beyond all Contradiction, of the Certainty of his Death. Why then did *John* forge a Circumstance, that was of no Consequence to his History, in order to prove another Fact, as to the Truth of which no Persons of any Consequence, whether Friends or Enemies, ever doubted?

I imagine the Reason of this Objection against the Credibility of *piercing Christ's Side*, arises from an Apprehension that this was quite *an unusual Thing*, and wholly *singular* in the Case of *Jesus*. But the celebrated *Anatomist* * *Bartholinus* observes, that both the *piercing* with the Lance, and *the breaking* of the Legs, were used to hasten the Death of such as were crucified. † *J. Lipsius* observes the same,

* T. Barthol. *de cruce*, §. 13. p. 111.

† Lips. *Oper.* V. 3. *de cruce*. l. 2. c. 13. p. 1189.

and produces as Instances, *Marcellianus* and *Marcus* two Martyrs, who by *Fabianus* their Judge's Order, were both dispatched by the Lance, after they had hung on the Cross, one Day and one Night. This Observation of these two learned Men, is confirmed by the most express Testimony of || *Origen*, who *several Times* asserts, that this use of the Lance, to quicken the Death of the Sufferers, was agreeable to *the Roman Custom*. And tho' our Saviour was really already dead; yet as *Lipsius* and *Grotius* observe, he was struck with the Lance to see if there were any Remains of Life in him; to which I think I may add: *Absolutely to destroy* them, if there were. So that this Fact is *highly credible* in its Nature, and was probably done by the Instigation of the *Jews* to make *sure Work*, when they found 'twas determined, that his Legs should not be broke.

But I find Infidelity may have also its Doubts; and the Proofs of Christ's Resurrection appear so strong, or the Evidences of his Appearance after his Crucifixion are so convincing, that even Infidels do not think themselves quite secure without some Reserve. And therefore to obviate all Difficulties, they tell us *Christ was possibly never Dead*. If *this single Action of Christ's being pierced with a Spear* be doubted of, it may be a Doubt whether he was dead, when he was taken down from the Cross, for he was taken down by *Joseph himself*. And if it be doubted whether *Jesus was really dead*, when he was put into the Sepulchre, which was a Cave hewn out of a Rock, it will be Matter of less Doubt whether he rose again; and why he rose in the Night; why his Countenance was so much altered, that his Disciples scarce knew him but by his Wounds; why he did not appear afterwards in

|| *Pilatus*—non jussit, secundum consuetudinem Romanorum de his qui crucifiguntur, percuti sub alas corporis Jesu, quod faciunt aliquando qui condemnant eos, qui in majoribus sceleribus sunt inventi. *Orig. Comment. in Mat. V. 3. p. 928. Col. 2. C. F. et p. 929. Col. 1. C. Edit. Benedict.*

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Publick, but to his Disciples only, &c. So that it seems it can scarce be denied, that *Jesus* was alive after his Crucifixion, and did appear to his Disciples. Infidelity itself is scarce capable of questioning it, and we *Christians* want no more to be allowed us.

VII. Appearance of Christ.

John xxi. 1, 12, 14.

After this, Jesus shewed himself again to the Disciples, at the Sea of Tiberias—And none of the Disciples durst ask him, Who art thou? knowing it was the Lord.—This is now the third Time, that Jesus shewed himself to his Disciples, after that he was risen from the Dead.

The Place of this Appearance was the Sea or Lake of *Tiberias* *, which was in *Galilee*; a Circumstance that corresponds with *Matthew* and *Mark's* Account of what the Angel said to *Mary*: *Behold he goeth into Galilee, there shall ye see him*; and with what *Jesus* himself said to the Women, returning to the Disciples, as related by *Matthew*: *Tell my Brethren, that they go into Galilee, and there shall they see me.* *John's* Testimony, in this Instance, is excepted against, because the other Evangelists do not mention this Appearance. But both *Matthew* and *Mark* confirm the Testimony of *John*, by assuring us, that *Christ* would shew himself to them in *Galilee*, where *John* tells us they actually saw him. The Draught of Fishes appeared to the Disciples miraculous, which made *John* conclude, even whilst at a Distance they could not particularly discern his Person, that it was *Christ*. When they came to Shore, they immediately knew him. He eat with them, and conversed with them, in such a Manner

* *Joh. vi. 1.*

as that they could not be deceived in their Opinion of him; and the Disciple that gives the Account was an Eye-Witness of the whole, and solemnly avers the Truth of the Relation.

VIII. Appearance of Christ.

Mat. xxviii.
16.—20.

1 Cor. xv. 5.

*Then of the
Twelve.*

*The Eleven
Disciples went a-
way into Galilee,
into a Mountain
where Jesus had
appointed them.
And when they
saw him, they
worshipped him.
But some doubt-
ed. And Jesus
came and spoke to
them, saying: All
Power is given
unto me, &c.*

I join these two Places *as parallel*, because St. Paul places this Appearance *to the Twelve* immediately before that to the Five Hundred Brethren. But *hath he not forgot himself, forgot that one of them was dead, and gone to his proper Place?* No. I acquit the Apostle wholly from the Charge. He speaks *really of the Twelve* Apostles, as their Number was, * when he wrote, supplied and fully compleated by the Election of *Matthias*; who was present with the Apostles at this Appearance of *Christ*, and chosen in the Place of *Judas*, to be a Witness to his Resurrection. And if he speaks only of the Eleven Apostles, without including *Matthias*, he might as

* *Act. i. 26.*

well call them by the Name of *the Twelve*, which was their *Round Number*, as other Authors may call, by the distinguishing Name of the whole Number, only a Part of that Number.

There is only one farther Difficulty in this Passage, and that is, that *Matthew* says: *That when they saw him, they worshipped him, but some doubted.* But then it should be considered, that the Expressions themselves will not allow us to put that Construction on them, which they bear in our Translation. For *Matthew* is express, that the Eleven Disciples saw him on this Mountain in *Galilee*, and that when they saw him *they worshipped him*. When therefore 'tis added, *that some doubted*, the Meaning cannot be, that some who worshipped him, doubted; for no one in his Senses would worship him as *Jesus*, 'till they were fully assured that it was he. The rendering therefore should have been †: *But*, or *Tho' some had doubted*; plainly referring to *Thomas*, and other of the Disciples, who were difficultly per-

† Οἱ δὲ ἐδίσσαν. This *Aorist* is frequently used to denote the Time past. ΟΤΙ ΕΤΕΛΕΣΕΝ Ο ΙΗΣΟΥΣ ΤΗΣ ΛΟΓΟΥΣ ΤΕΤΗΣ, when *Jesus had finished* these Words, *Mat. xix. 1.* ΕΠΕΙ ΠΟΛΛΑ ΗΚΗΣΕ, After he *had heard* many Things. *Herod. Calliop. p. 549. lin. 1.* ΟΤΙ ΜΗ ΚΑΜΝΟΝΤΑ ΤΗΣ ΟΦΘΑΛΜΟΥ ΕΥ ΙΣΑΚΗ ΕΠΟΣΗΛΕΥΣΕΝ. Because he *had cured* him in *Ithaca*, of the Disorder in his Eyes, *Id. vit. Homer. p. 565.* ΕΙ ΜΗ ΝΙΚΟΓΡΑΤΟΣ ΕΚΩΛΥΣΕ, ΔΙΦΘΕΙΡΑΝ ΑΥ. They *had killed* them, if *Nicostratus had not forbidden* them. *Thucyd. l. 3. §. 75. p. 191.* ΕΙ ΤΑ ΠΡΩΤΑ ΘΙΑΣΔΕΙΣ ΑΚΩΝ ΕΠΗΛΞΕΙ, if he *had done* it at first unwillingly, and by Force, *Demost. in Philip. Or. 2. p. 66. A.* ΕΠΕΙ Δ' ΕΙΣ ΧΑΡΧΙΝΔΟΝ ΚΑΤΕΠΛΕΥΣΕ. After he *had sailed* to *Carthage*. *Diod. Sic. l. 13. p. 186. B.* Other Places might easily be mentioned. So in the Place before us. *But some had doubted*, or as I think it might have been rendered: *Tho' some had doubted.* The very learned *Raphelius* hath produced two Passages out of *Xenophon*, to prove that Οἱ δὲ signifies, *But some*. And both those Passages may, I apprehend, be rendered with equal Propriety: *Tho' some*. So also in the Passage out of *Ælian, V. Hist. l. 5. c. 17.* ΕΛΕΓΕΤΟ ΓΑΡ ΑΚΗΣΙΩΣ, ΟΙ ΔΕ ΜΕΜΗΝΩΣ ΤΕΤΟ ΔΡΑΣΑΙ. He is said to have killed it involuntarily, tho' others say he did it thro' Madness. But this is not material.

suaded of *Christ's* Resurrection. So that the Passage, far from intimating that any of them doubted after they had now seen and worshipped *Christ*, plainly declares the contrary; that even they who had formerly doubted concerning the Truth of his Resurrection, were now abundantly satisfied, and paid their Adoration to him as their Lord and Master.

IX. Appearance
of *CHRIST*.

I Cor. xv. 6.

After that he was seen of above Five Hundred Brethren at once, of whom the greater Part remain unto this present. But some are fallen asleep.

Grotius, and some other learned Men, think that this Appearance of *Christ* is the same with the last mentioned, and that these Five Hundred Brethren were with the Apostles on the Mount in *Galilee*. I believe indeed that *Christ* was seen by them in *Galilee*; but as *Matthew* seems to confine the last mentioned Appearance to the Eleven Disciples, I should rather incline to think, this to the Five Hundred was at another Time. The Thing is of no great Consequence When it was, since the Five Hundred were convinced of his Resurrection, tho' the Time and Place where they saw him is not particularly specified, and the greatest Part of them were actually alive, when *St. Paul* thus publicly declared the Fact to the *Corinthian* Converts; a Circumstance that corroborates the Apostle's Testimony, and plainly shews that he had living Evidence enough to support it.

But the Five Hundred Brethren are all lumped together, and might as easily have been made Five Thousand. I answer: *St. Paul's* Testimony in this Article, is greatly confirmed by what *Peter* observes

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in his Discourse to the Disciples that were met together, at *Jerusalem*, sometime between the Resurrection, and the Gift of Tongues at *Pentecost*, about the Choice of an Apostle in the room of *Judas*. *The Number met together was about an Hundred and Twenty*, without any Intimation that this was the whole Number of those who believed in *Christ*. St. *Peter* tells them *, that of all these Men, which have companied with us, all the Time that the Lord *Jesus* went in and out amongst us, beginning from the Baptism of *John*, unto the same Day that he was taken up from us, must one be ordained to be a Witness with us of his Resurrection. So that here are One Hundred and Twenty Persons allowed publickly by *Peter* to have companied with the Apostles, 'till the very Time that *Christ* was taken up, and who were capable of being proper Witnesses to the Resurrection. And as this Hundred and Twenty are only spoken of as met together at this Time, and not as the whole of the Number, that could have borne Witness to the same Fact; St. *Paul's* Account of Five Hundred who had seen him risen, hath nothing incredible in it, or contradictory with any other Account, but is thus far attested by *Peter*, from whom, probably, he had received the Information that he gave to the *Corinthians*.

'Tis objected, that St. *Paul* writes by Hear-say; therefore he who was as one born out of due Time, can be no proper Evidence to testify of Things done before he was born. I answer; that the stoning of *Stephen* appears by the *Acts* to have been but a very little while after *Christ's* Resurrection and Ascension, and *Saul*, or *Paul*, was a very active Man in that Murder, and therefore was born many Years before the Death and Resurrection of *Christ*, and therefore testified of Things transacted in his own Time, and of

* *Act*. i. 21, 22.

which he had all possible Opportunities to be informed. And his Witness is a strong Confirmation of the Truth of the Resurrection; since 'tis impossible to suppose, that without the fullest Certainty of that Fact, he would have ever become a Preacher of that Doctrine and Religion, he was once so zealous and furious a Persecutor of.

X. Appearance
of CHRIST.

1 Cor. xv. 7.

After that He was seen of James.

St. Paul expressly tells us *, that when he was at Jerusalem, he saw and conversed with Peter and James, and therefore there is the highest Reason to believe, that he had from them the Relation he gives of these two Appearances to these Apostles.

XI. Appearance
of CHRIST.

Luke xxiv.
46—51.

Act. i.
4—9.

1 Cor. xv. 7.

*Then of all the
Apostles.*

*And he said un-
to them, Behold
I send the Pro-
mise of my Fa-
ther upon you;
but tarry ye in the
City of Jerusa-
lem until ye be
endued with
Power from on
high.*

*Being assembled
together with
them, he com-
manded that they
should not depart
from Jerusalem,
but wait for the
Promise of the
Father, which
ye have heard of
me.—*

*But ye shall re-
ceive Power af-
ter that the Holy
Ghost is come up-
on you.*

* Gal. i. 18, 19.

Thus it behoved
Christ to suffer,
and to rise from
the Dead the third
Day, and that
Repentance and
Remission of Sins
should be preach-
ed in his Name,
amongst all Na-
tions, beginning
at Jerusalem;
and you are
Witnesses of these
Things.

And he led them
out as far as to
Bethany, and he
lift up his Hands
and blessed them.

And it came to
pass, while he
blessed them, he
was parted from
them, and car-
ried up to Hea-
ven.

And ye shall be
Witnesses to me,
both in Jerusa-
lem, and in all
Judea, and in
Samaria, and un-
to the uttermost
Parts of the
Earth.

And when he
had spoken these
Things, whilst
they beheld, he
was taken up, and
a Cloud received
him out of their
Sight.

These three Accounts are parallel to each other :
And 'tis plain, that not only the Apostles, but ma-
ny others, particularly the Hundred and Twenty
mentioned by *Peter*, were present at this Appear-
ance of *Christ*, and his Ascension into Heaven ; be-
cause *they companied with the Apostles all the Time Christ*
was with them, 'till his Ascension into Heaven. The
Instructions he gave them, agreeing exactly with their
after Conduct, the Converse they had with him, the
Solemnity of his blessing them, his Separation from
them

them, his Reception by a Cloud, his Ascension out of *their* Sight, the Assurance they received by the Angels present at his Ascension; together with the amazing Event, that corresponded to the Prediction of *Christ*, in the Gifts of the Holy Ghost at the Feast of *Pentecost*; are such strong Circumstances, and carry in them such a kind of Evidence of the Truth of *Christ's* Resurrection, as, in my Opinion, leaves no Ground of Suspicion, either that the Apostles were imposed on themselves, or that they had the least Intention to impose on the World by a false Representation of a Fact, which they knew was an Imposture and Lye.

XII. Appearance of CHRIST.

Acts vii. 55, 56.

But he (Stephen) being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up stedfastly into Heaven, and saw the Glory of God, and Jesus standing on the Right Hand of God. And he said, Behold I see the Heavens opened, and the Son of Man standing on the Right Hand of God.

This is the Testimony of one to the Truth of *Christ's* being not only alive after his Crucifixion, but in Circumstances of great Glory too, that will be allowed at least to be *under no Influence* from Worldly Views; this Declaration being made to the Face of his Enemies, and just before his being murdered by their Rage and Cruelty. Some will censure him, probably, for a *Visionary and Enthusiast*. But Censure is no Proof, and 'tis not to be expected that any Thing in these Cases will be allowed without Evidence. When *Stephen* is clearly shewn to be a weak and distemper'd Person, he will readily be acknowledged as such.

XIII. Ap-

XIII. Appearance of CHRIST.

Acts ix.

1 Cor. xv.

3-7. xxii. 6-11.

8.

xxvi. 13-19.

And as he journeyed, he came near to Damascus. And suddenly there shined round about him a Light from Heaven; and he fell to the Earth, and heard a Voice saying to him: Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? And he said: Who art thou Lord? And the Lord said: I am Jesus, whom thou persecutest. It is hard for thee to kick against the Pricks. And he trembling and astonished, said: Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? And the Lord said unto him: Arise, and go into the City, and it shall be told thee what thou must do. And the Men that journeyed

And last of all, he was seen of me also, as of one born out of due Time.

with

with him stood
speechless, hear-
ing a Voice, but
seeing no Man.

St. Paul, in the Passage to the Corinthians, styles himself an *Abortive*. Last of all, he was seen of me also, who am as it were an *Abortive*, i. e. as he himself explains it in the next Verse: *I am the least of the Apostles, that am not meet to be called an Apostle*; in Allusion to * *abortive Productions*, which have not attained to their natural Size, but are generally small and contemptible, and scarce worthy to be reckoned amongst the human Species. The Effect which this Appearance had on Paul, demonstrates the Reality of it. It was at Noon Day, in his Journey to *Damascus*, in the midst of his Attendants, who saw the Glory that surrounded him, and were themselves struck down by the Brightness of it. It was attended with a Voice, even with the Voice of *Jesus*, declaring himself persecuted by *Saul*, and shewing him the Danger of such a Conduct. It sent him to *Damascus* for Instruction, where he found it, and from a Persecutor of *Christ* and his Disciples transform'd him into a firm Believer, and a zealous Preacher of the Christian Religion. It will be extremely difficult to account for these Things by any Pretences of *Enthusiasm*, and a disordered Imagination; since Paul will appear to have been a Man of a clear Head and sound Understanding, and as far distant from a *distemper'd Visionary*, as any of those who may throw this Imputation on him.

These are the several Accounts which are expressly recorded concerning the Appearances of *Christ* after

* *Appellat pæctum pater, et pullum, male parvus.*
Si cui filius est, ut abortivus fuit olim
Sisyphus.

HOR. Sat. l. i. Sat.

his Death and Resurrection. The Author of the *Acts* * tells us, that he shewed himself alive, after his Passion, to his Apostles, by many infallible Proofs; being seen of them forty Days, and speaking of the Things pertaining to the Kingdom of God. With him agrees John, who assures us, that † many other Signs also did Jesus in the Presence of his Disciples, which are not written in this Book. And in another Place. ‡ There are also many other Things, which Jesus did, the which if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the World itself could not contain the Books that should be written; which Words have been thought by several Writers to be very Hyperbolical. But if Jesus did and said innumerable more Things than are actually recorded of him, where is the vast Impropriety of this figurate Expression? I imagine the World would scarce contain the Account of them; a Figure not larger than what we have in *Genesis*: Let us build us a Tower, whose Top may reach unto Heaven; and in || *Homer*, whose Fir Trees were as high as Heaven; and in † *Xenophon*, where *Cyrus* his Deer leaped up to Heaven. Or why may we not interpret the Words, in what I take to be the true and proper Sense of them: I suppose that the World, i. e. that Mankind would not χωρειν *** receive the Books

* *Act*. i. 3. † *Joh*. xi. 39. ‡ *Joh*. xxi. 25.

|| Ελατη τῆς θρακομένης.

Odyf. ε. γ. 239.

† Αἱ μὲν ελαφοί, ὡς περ πίνκται, ἤλθοντο πρὸς τὸν θράνον.

Cyr. p. 40. Edit. *Hutchin*.

*** Χωρειν signifies to contain or receive, as a Vessel doth. There were set six Water-pots, χωρεται containing two or three Firkins a piece. *Joh*. ii. 6. μετὰ τῶν καλῶν χυτρῶν — τῶν ἐξ ἑκάστων χωρεσων. *Plat. Hip. Maj*. p. 288. D. Edit. Ser. Ταῦτα ἐξηκοντα τριπρεὶς χωρεῖνται. *Diodor. Sic*. l. 14. p. 238. *lin. fen*. Et saepe apud *Herod. Raph. Annot. ex Herod. ad Joh*. ii. 6. Ἀπερχομαι γὰρ πρὸς καταλείπων τὴν οὐκὴν χωρεσαν ἀνδράς ἀγαθὸς πολλῶν. *Dion. Hal*. l. 8. p. 493. l. 40. Hence 'tis transferred to the Mind, to de-

note

Books that should be wrote. They would be too many for their Use, and they would not receive them so as to pay them the Regard they deserved, and rightly to understand them. Or as * others explain them; the World would *not receive them*, i. e. The Books would *appear almost incredible*, on account of the large Number of Facts that would be related.

Thus have I considered the several Accounts of the New Testament Writers, in Reference to this great Event of the Resurrection of *Christ*. And I think, on the whole, that the Evidence of the Truth of it is sufficient to satisfy those, who will consider it with that unprejudiced Disposition they ought to do; and that 'tis attended with no other kind of Difficulties, but what may be urged with as much Strength against any Four or Five Historians, who have all written the History of the same Person; in whose Writings it would be reckoned unreasonable and impertinent to expect, either that they should all relate only the same Facts, and all the same Circumstances of every or any Fact, without any Addition, Omission, or Alteration whatsoever. But the Force of this Evidence will better appear from the following Chapter.

note the Reception and *Understanding* of any Thing. Ου πάντες χωρεσι τον λογον τωτον. *All do not receive*, i. e. *understand this Saying.* Mat. xix. 11. Οσον αυτω κ' η ψυχη χωρει. *As far as his Mind is capable of containing.* *Ælian*, V. H. l. 3. c. 9. p. 214. *Edit. Gronov.* So here: Mankind would not be capable of receiving, and rightly understanding them.

* Vid. *Cl. Wolfii An. Philol. in loc.*

C H A P. VIII.

*The Evidence for the Resurrection of CHRIST
summed up.*

THE Resurrection of *Christ*, considered in all its Circumstances, is I think supported by as strong Evidence, as such an extraordinary Event is capable of, and as it is possible any past Fact can be. That he predicted his own Death, and Resurrection on the Third Day is incontestible, and the Objections against the preciseness of the Time, have been shewn to be groundless. That the knowledge of this Prediction reached the Pharisees and Priests is plainly asserted, and probable in the Nature of the Thing itself; there being no Prohibition to the Disciples to publish it, and the Scribes and Pharisees continually conversing with him and them, and being attentive to every Thing they said and did, and having heard *Christ* himself speak of it in such a manner, as that they could not possibly be deceived as to his Meaning. In Consequence of this Knowledge, having put him to Death, they guard his Sepulchre, to prevent any intended Fraud, by stealing away the Body, and then asserting his Resurrection. And yet on the Day fixed by the Prophecy, the Soldiers return to those who placed them, and tell of strange Sights, and an Earthquake, that drove them in Terror from their Station. The Body is confessedly gone, and no Pretence that he was not actually dead, or that his Disciples came and over-powered the Soldiers, and seized the Body with Violence; or, which would have been the most effectual Calumny, that Joseph and Nicodemus, and some other of his rich Disciples came and bribed the Watch, and so carried off the Body by their Connivance. All this while,
tho'

tho' his Disciples knew that the Body was gone, yet they had not *the least Imagination* that he was really risen from the dead; but seem to have given up almost all hope in him, of his being the *Messiah* and *the Son of God*. But in Order to prepare them for this important Event, the Discovery of the Resurrection *is made gradually*, and by various Steps, that their Conviction might be stronger, and more unquestionable.

The Persons who first came to the Sepulchre were *certain Women*, with a design *to embalm* his Body, with *Ointment and sweet Spices*. But instead of finding it, they are surprized to see the Stone of the Sepulchre gone, and with a Vision of Angels, one of which assured them, that *Jesus* whom they sought, *was not dead but alive*. They immediately fled from the Sepulchre; but one, soon returning, or abiding after the rest, and scarce crediting what the Angel had said, was *still solicitous* about the Body of the Lord; till at length he himself appears to her in such a Manner, as *not to affright* her, but to assure and satisfy her that 'twas himself, and orders her to hasten to his Disciples, and tell them of his Resurrection. She immediately joins her Companions, and as they were hastening Home, he appears to them all, that their *united Testimony* might carry the stronger Conviction. But all they said, seemed *as idle Tales* to the Disciples. After this he appears *to two of them*, neither of which were Apostles, and *gradually* makes himself known to them. They also make their Report to the Apostles, and find that *Peter* also had seen him. Almost before they had finished their Report, *Jesus* himself appears in the midst of them, removes their Terror, assures them 'twas himself, and gives them *full Conviction* that he was alive; and to the Day of his Ascension frequently appears to, and converses with them; and at length, after *Forty Days*, leaves them

with a *Promise*, which he assured them should be accomplished *not many Days after*. Concerning all which, I beg leave to make the following Observations.

I. 'Tis remarkable, that the Accounts given us by the Four Evangelists, are perfectly *suitable to the Character* of the Writers. They were *plain Men*, who understood little or nothing of *the Art of Writing*, and from whom therefore little or nothing of Elegance, exact Method, Order, Disposition, Connection, and the like *Excellencies of Writing* ought to be expected. And accordingly the several Accounts given by them are plain, simple and unadorned; related as they appeared to them, without any *artificial Dress* or Gloss, without any apparent Intention to surprize the World by the *marvellous kind of Writing*; representing only Facts in a *short Manner*, without any Reflections upon them, or *artful*, laboured Vindications of them, or *suppressing* any Circumstances, that might appear to *Critical Readers* liable to Objections. Their Relations are of such a kind, as evidently demonstrate there was *no Collusion*, no joint Fraud carried on by these Writers, but that each reported what he actually saw, heard, remembered, or was informed of by others, who were Eye or Ear-Witnesses to the Things or Facts related. Hence there may be some *apparent Difficulty*, in the Order of Things spoken of; the *same Discourses* may be represented in somewhat *different Words*, or one Fact, and *one Part of a Discourse*, may be reported by one, which is omitted by another. It could scarce be otherwise in the Nature of the Thing; and that we find it so in reality is an *intrinsic Evidence* of the Genuineness of the Accounts, and of *the Integrity* of the Relators. Had the Four Evangelists written exactly *in the same Order*, related only *the same Facts*, reported only *the same*

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Dis-

Discourses, and reported them just in *the same Words*; I doubt not but our Enemies would have cried out: *Plain Juggle and Imposture!* How is it possible these Writers should have *so exactly agreed* in all these Circumstances, had they not *concerted these Matters* together, and resolved each to support the others Account; or if each succeeding Writer had not taken his Account from the former, whereby instead of being *Four distinct Witnesses*, they are in reality *but One*? And the Objection from hence would have been stronger, than any I have yet seen drawn from any other Article. But,

II. I would observe, that there are *all the Characters of Integrity* appear in these Writers, that can possibly be demanded or desired. The *very Inconsistencies* that at first View they seem to be chargeable with, shew at least there was *no Contrivance* amongst them, to deceive others. They make no Scruple to tell us, that the first Appearances of *Christ* were *to a few Women*, with whose *single Testimony* they well knew the World would be far from being satisfied. They seem to have concealed no Circumstances of *Christ's* Appearances, *however exceptionable* they might possibly be in some Mens Opinion and Judgment. They plainly assure us, that the Disciples imagin'd the first Accounts of the Resurrection, to be *mere Dreams* and Tales, and unsupported Imaginations, and were not in the least disposed to receive or credit them. It doth not appear that they could have any *present Interests* to answer, by the Accounts they gave, if they had not known them to be true; or that they were set on to write them by Persons, who either could reward them, or receive themselves any worldly Advantages from the Publication of those Accounts to others. Had the Doctrine of the Resurrection of *Christ*, and his Religion, been consistent with *their*
pre-

pre-conceived Notions of the Temporal Kingdom and Reign of the *Messiah*, I can easily discern a Reason, why a set of *artful Men* might have agreed to propagate it, and how they might have been very substantial Gainers by it, and *how exceptionable* their Report would have been on this very Account. But the Integrity of the Evangelists can never be thus impeached. Whether the Account of the Resurrection was true or false, had they acted the *merely prudential Part*, and consulted only their own *secular Interest* in their own Country, they must have *intirely suppressed* it; since the Publication of it, by Conversation, Preaching, or Writing, was *arraigning the Honour* and Justice of the whole Nation, Government and People, and directly charging them with the Murder of an Innocent Man, a venerable Prophet, and of *that very Messiah*, whom their Prophets had promised, and the generality of them lived in Expectation of; a Conduct that could not but excite against them the *Public Resentment*, and expose them to the severest Treatment.

III. Tho' the Accounts of the several Evangelists, are charged with *palpably contradicting one another in every Particular they give, and as containing such Inconsistencies, Improbabilities, Absurdities and Contradictions, as would destroy the Credit of other History*; yet it will appear upon the most Impartial and *Critical View* of, and search into them, that *they all correspond*, and may fairly and certainly be reconciled. Some Writers have endeavoured to set them *every one at Variance*, but without being able to prove the Point they have aimed at. There are Circumstances and Marks, that point out those to be *different Facts*, which they have *blended* and confounded into one. In other Cases they have made Contradictions, merely from *their Ignorance* of the Language and Diction of the New Testament; and
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in other Instances have, thro' *Carelessness*, I will not say a *worse Reason*, misrepresented plain Expressions, on Purpose to make them contradict each other, and to expose the New Testament Writers to Contempt. But these are the Endeavours of *impotent Adversaries*. The Four Evangelists are in every Part consistent, with no other Allowance than what *Candour* and *Equity* dictate, and what every *honest Reader* would make use of, with Respect to any other *Authors* whatsoever. And this *real Harmony* and Consistency, in *different Writers*, writing at *several Times*, who were partly *Eye* and *Ear-Witnesses*, and who partly received their Accounts by *Information*, and wrote what was *the common Belief* of *Christians* at that Time; not only shews that *the general Faith* was then uniform and consistent, but that the Testimony of these Writers deserves to be impartially considered, and is in its Nature worthy of our Regard and Credit.

IV. These Writers all agree, that there were *several Appearances of Christ* after his Resurrection. *Matthew* mentions that to *Mary Magdalene* and her Companions; and because he relates what the Angel said of *Christ's going into Galilee*, he therefore particularly takes Notice of *his being seen there by the Eleven*, and of the Commission he gave them to *disciple all Nations by Baptism and Teaching*; but without one single Intimation that there were no other Appearances than these. *Mark* expressly mentions that to *Mary Magdalene*, that to *the two Disciples*, and that to *the Eleven Apostles*, when *Thomas was present* with them. *Luke* gives a particular Account of the Appearance of *Christ* to *the two Disciples*, of that to *Peter*, and of that to *the Ten Disciples*, when *Thomas was absent*. *John* more particularly describes that to *Mary Magdalene*, mentions some particular Circumstances of the Appearance

ance to *the Ten*, gives an Account of that to *the Eleven*, and, what the others have omitted, describes another to *Seven of them* at the Sea of *Tiberias* in *Galilee*. *Luke* in his *Gospel*, and in his *Acts*, mentions *the last Appearance* to the Apostles, just before his Ascension, and the Order he gave them to go to *Jerusalem*, and *the Promise* he made them, that was to be accomplish'd in a few Days after. *Peter* tells us, that 120 assembled at *Jerusalem*, just after the Ascension, *who had accompanied with the Apostles all the Time that Christ conversed with them, from the Baptism of John, to the Time that Jesus was taken up from them*; and *St. Paul* testifies, that he was seen of *Peter, of the Twelve, of 500 Brethren, of James, of all the Apostles, and lastly of himself*. See now *the Harmony* of these Writers. *Mark* and *John* agree, that *the first Appearance* was to *Mary Magdalene*. *Mark* and *Luke* agree, in that *to the two Disciples*. *Mark* and *John* in that *to the Eleven*, when *Thomas* first saw him. *Luke* and *John* in that *to the Ten Disciples*, when *Thomas* was absent. *Luke* and *Paul* in that *to Peter*. *Matthew* and *John* in *Christ's being in Galilee*, and appearing there to the Apostles, tho' they relate Appearances made at different Times. And tho' in one or two Instances, we have the Testimony only of a single Writer, yet that Testimony is contradicted by no other, and hath the Circumstances of Time, and Place, and of the same general End to be answered, to establish and confirm it; besides the plainest Assurances that *Jesus said and did many other Things*, which the Historians have not related. Now tho' one or two Appearances only of *Jesus*, after his Resurrection, might have rendred the Fact more exceptionable, and liable to Objection; yet *the frequency of these Appearances*, carries in them such a strengthened re-iterated Evidence, as is not easily to be denied or refuted. Especially considering,

V. *The Nature of the Satisfaction* given to the Apostles and Disciples, by these *repeated Appearances*, and the several Circumstances attending them, as recorded by the several Historians. When he appeared to *Mary Magdalene*, tho' at first she could not discern who it was, being prevented by her own Fears, *and the want of full Light*, and the *necessary Alteration* of his Person, from immediately knowing him, yet she soon receives full Conviction, and as I have shewn, probably, *embraced his Feet* in Adoration of her Lord. In the next Appearance to her and her Companions, 'tis expressly said, *they came and held him by the Feet and worshipped him*, and found him to be *substantially Jesus*. When he first discovered himself to the Ten Disciples, they were so far from thinking him really risen, tho' they had been assured of it by *Mary Magdalene*, and her Companions, by the two Disciples, and *Peter*, that they were *extremely affrighted* and terrified, and imagined they *had seen only his Apparition*. How were they convinced? Why by every way in which 'twas possible almost for them to receive Conviction. *Behold my Hands and my Feet, that 'tis I myself. Handle me and see, for a Spirit hath not Flesh and Bones, as ye see me have; and he shewed them his Hands and his Feet; permitted them to handle him* for their entire Satisfaction. After this *he eat* in their Presence, to convince them he was alive, and that his Body was capable of receiving Sustenance like theirs. When he appeared to *Thomas*, he gave him *the particular Satisfaction* he demanded. *Reach hither thy Finger. Behold my Hands. Reach hither thy Hand and thrust it into my Side, and be not faithless but believing.* This sensible Demonstration of his being *really Jesus*, effectually cured his Infidelity, and in Acknowledgment of his Belief that *Christ* was risen, he cries out, *my Lord;*

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and

and in Adoration of *the Divine Power* who raised him, *my God*; not knowing which most deserved his Wonder, the Resurrection of *his Lord*, or the amazing Power of *his God*. And I think no Exclamation could be *more natural* on such a surprising Occasion, than that of *my Lord and my God*. In another Appearance in *Galilee*, he eat with them, and shewed his Divine Power by the miraculous Draught of Fishes. In his last Appearance, when he led them from *Jerusalem*, out to *Bethany*, he lift up his Hands over them, and solemnly *blest them*, and whilst parting from them, they as solemnly adored him. In all his Appearances to them, *he freely conversed* with them, and on such Subjects as were worthy his Character, and suitable to their Circumstances, and the Message in which they were soon to be employed. So that if frequently *seeing* him, *handling* him, *eating and drinking with* him, and *discoursing with* him, and that for Forty Days Continuance, were proper Means of convincing them, they had all that Conviction which could be desired or given them; and 'tis I think impossible to conceive of any stronger Demonstration that they could have, or that they could be deceived in the Judgment they formed of him, in Consequence of it. For,

VI. They were *themselves fully and absolutely convinced* of the Truth of his Resurrection, and witnessed to others a Fact, which they were abundantly persuaded in their own Minds was *an unquestionable Reality*. Tho' they thought at first that they had seen only *his Spirit* or Apparition, they soon found 'twas *the Lord himself*. Even those who had *the strongest Doubts*, were at length fully satisfied, and in Consequence of this Satisfaction, frequently worshipped him. Tho' upon his Death they gave up all Hopes of his being *the Saviour of Israel*, yet, because

because they knew him risen, they openly declared him to the whole Nation to be both *Lord and Christ*. The whole of their Conduct is a Demonstration that they believed, *that they knew*, I should rather say, that he was risen from the Dead. For they declared it openly, they *suffered for their Testimony*, and rejoiced that they were *counted worthy to suffer for it*. The Doctrines they taught, they taught *as his*; the Religion they propagated was *in his Name*; the miraculous Works they performed they declared to be *by his Power*. 'Twas his Honour they proclaimed, his Glories they published, preaching *not themselves, but Jesus Christ*, and *themselves only his Servants*, and as accountable, with all Mankind, at his future Tribunal. They speak of his Resurrection as a most certain and indisputable Fact, with the utmost Courage, Assurance, and Boldness, without the least Hesitation, or Fear of Contradiction. In Consequence of this they declare him alive, in Circumstances of the utmost Glory, and enforce their Doctrines and Precepts by the Consideration of his second Appearance; commanding us to look and prepare for it, as an Event that was unquestionably to come to pass, and, in itself, of the highest possible Importance to Mankind. In a Word, in their Testimony to these Truths, they were uniform and constant, and every Thing they said and did in their publick Ministration, discovered the Fulness of their own Persuasion; nor is there the least Circumstance in their History, that can give any Suspicion of *their acting a Part*, or that they preached the Resurrection of *Christ* to others, without believing it themselves. Again,

VII. 'Tis a Circumstance worthy of Remark, that their Conviction was *in Opposition to the strongest Prejudices* they had conceived against his Resurrection. They appear to have been so far from a

credulous Disposition in this Affair, that from all the Accounts 'tis evident, they were *very difficultly persuaded* at all of the Truth of it. Tho' he frequently predicted his Death and Resurrection, they *understood nothing* of it, either how the *Messiah* could die, or how he could be raised again. Tho' his Resurrection had been confirmed by several Eye-Witnesses, by *Mary Magdalene*, and her Companions, by the two Disciples, and by *Peter*, the rest looked on it as *Delusion* and *mere Imagination*. The Report of others was not enough to satisfy *these Unbelievers*. *Thomas* stood it out against the united Testimony of all the rest, and demanded to be satisfied *in his own way*, and yet became as firm a Believer as any of them. What Pretence then to charge them with Credulity, when they were *arrant Unbelievers*, and cried out upon the first Report of it, *Delusion and Idle Tales*, with as much Assurance as any of our *Modern Scepticks* can possibly do; and did not believe at last, 'till they had such Conviction as 'twas impossible for them any longer to resist. They demanded all the Demonstration that their Senses could give. They had that Demonstration, and seemed almost at first to *question*, even whether *their own Senses had not deceived* them; and therefore supposing a Resurrection *possible*, and if real, *capable* of being proved, 'tis impossible it could be proved by other Means than what it was proved by, and as impossible to resist that Proof to whomsoever it was given. Again,

VIII. *The Number of the Witnesses* is another substantial Proof of the Certainty of the Fact. *Jesus* appeared to Men and Women, to Persons singly, to the Eleven Apostles, to One Hundred and Twenty, to Five Hundred, at various Times, and on various Occasions. *He shewed himself to them alive, by many infallible Proofs, being seen of them forty*

ty Days. Even in several of those Appearances, where the Apostles are only particularly mentioned as present, 'tis highly probable that many others of the Disciples were with them, and Witnesses to them. For in the beforementioned Passage of *Peter's* Speech to his Brethren the Apostles, he more than intimates, that the Hundred and Twenty *had been with them as Companions from the Beginning of Christ's Ministration, to the very Day he was taken up from them.* Luke expressly mentions, more present with the Ten Apostles, when Christ discovered himself to them. * *They found the Eleven gathered together, and those who were with them.* John also, in relating the same Event, tells us, † that *Mary Magdalene* told the Disciples, and that when the Disciples were assembled, *Jesus stood in the midst of them.* And again, Eight Days after, *his Disciples* were within; which Term may include other Persons besides the Apostles. Of these *original Witnesses* we have yet extant the Testimony of *Matthew* and *John* in their Gospels, of the whole College of the Twelve Apostles, to the Jews gather'd from all Nations at *Jerusalem*, at the Feast of *Pentecost*; and of *Peter*, *James*, and *Jude*, in their *Epistles*, who either expressly speak of him as actually risen from the Dead, or as alive, and in Circumstances of great Glory, long after his Crucifixion.

Now though 'tis scarce possible to conceive how any one Person could be deceived in the Proof that was given of the Resurrection, yet were they all deceived? What, was there not one of the Apostles, not one of those who were with them, not one of the Hundred and Twenty, or Five Hundred, that had Eyes to see, or Ears to hear, or Hands to feel, or Judgment to discern? Were they all deluded with a *fantastick Appearance*, and the Senses of such

* *Luke* xxiv. 33.

† *John* xx. 18, 19.

a Variety of Persons all *absolutely imposed on*, and deceived? What Credibility is there in such a Supposition? Or did they all agree to *support a Lye*, a known Lye, an incredible, obnoxious, and *dangerous Lye*? A few might have kept *the important Secret*, had the whole Affair been a Fraud. But could such a Secret ever be preserved where so large a Number was privy to it? Were they so steady and *true to a Falsehood*, as that neither Interest nor Persecution could move them to discover it? Suppose the Twelve Apostles had something *to gain* by it, as being the Heads and *Leaders* of the Party, what Hopes of Gain could *the Underlings*, the Seventy, the Hundred and Twenty, the Five Hundred have? What should induce them to join in the Fraud, and to become Partners in, and Supporters of an *unprofitable Iniquity*? If they knew nothing of the Resurrection, had never seen *Christ* after his Death, nor had any good Proof of it from the Apostles, how could the Apostles persuade them into it? Did they bribe them by Fish or Money? How could *Peter* appeal to them, that they had been *their Companions all the Time Christ had been with them*, to his Ascension, and so were capable of becoming Witnesses with them of the Facts and Truths they were to relate to the World? These, and the like Questions, naturally arise on this Subject, and will be found extremely difficult to be answered.

IX. The *Conduct of the Apostles* soon after *Christ's* Resurrection and Ascension, is a strong Confirmation of the Truth of their Evidence to these Facts. Had they lain still and quiet *for some Years*, 'till their crucified Master had been forgotten, and the popular Rage against him had subsided, and the principal Persons who had destroyed him had been dead, and there had been few or none left that
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could have contradicted any Reports they might have spread of the Reasons of his Death, and the Circumstances of his Resurrection; this would have carried such an *Air of Cunning* and Design, as would have given too much Reason for Suspicions in their Disfavour. And yet I think, *worldly Prudence* must have directed them to such a Conduct, and that, in all human Probability, they had no Prospect of making any *present Gains*, by reviving his Name and Cause, considering what had just happened to their Master, and what was the general Disposition of the Priests, the Rulers, and People, to him and them. But what did the Apostles do? Did they stay 'till the Indignation was past? Did they wait for a *favourable Opportunity*? No. In a few Weeks after their Master's Crucifixion *, without any Regard to Consequences, they publicly declare, in the midst of *Jerusalem*, before the *Jews* gathered together from all Countries, that *Jesus of Nazareth was a Man approved of God amongst them, by Miracles and Wonders and Signs, which God did by him in the midst of them*; appealing to themselves as Witnesses that they knew it; charge them plainly with wickedly murdering of him, and solemnly affirm that God raised him up, *having loosed the Pains of Death*; that they were Witnesses of it, and that God had made the same *Jesus, whom they had crucified, both Lord and Christ*. Here was a publick and bold Arraignment of the Justice of the whole Nation, the Charge of Murder openly fixed on them, the Murder of a Prophet, to whose Miracles they themselves had been Witnesses; this murdered Person they declare to be risen again, and proclaim him to be the true Lord and Messiah. Madmen surely, if they had not the strongest Assurance of his Resurrection, and knew it impossible that any *Characters of Fraud* could be fixed on them, or that they

* *Act. ii.*

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were incapable, beyond all Contradiction, of proving the important Article of his Resurrection. Soon after this, two of these Fishermen, who were *Christ's* Apostles, go openly into the Temple, in one of the Gates of which they cure a Man, *by the Name of Jesus*, that had been *born lame*; and in the midst of the Concourse of the People that ran together to see the Cripple that had been healed, peremptorily declare, that *the God of their Fore-fathers had glorified Jesus, whom they had delivered up, and denied in the Presence of Pilate, preferring a Murtherer to him, and murdered him that was the Prince of Life, but that God had raised him, and that by him the Cripple whom they saw had been made whole.* What was the Consequence of this Conduct in the Apostles? The Priests, the Captain of the Temple, and the Sadducees came upon them, *being grieved they preached thro' Jesus the Resurrection of the Dead,* laid hold of them, and put them in Custody. Be-

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Whether it be right in the Sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye. For we cannot but speak the Things which we have seen and heard. Had *Christ* been an *Impostor*, could they have proved him so, could they have detected any Fraud in any one of his Miracles; had his Trial been legal, fair, impartial and honourable, and his Condemnation founded upon any Conviction of honest and credible Witnesses; had there been any Collusion, Trick, and Violence in the Removal of his Body; and could the Soldiers, who guarded him, have given any consistent Account of what was done at the Monument, whilst they were placed there for Security; there ought to have been *some publick authentick Account* of *Caiaphas* and the *Jewish* Rulers to vindicate themselves, to justify their Sentence, to give the true Character of *Christ*, and to confront and destroy the Testimony of the Apostles. This would have been an *Act of Justice* to themselves, and they owed it to their own Nation and Mankind, and would have most effectually hindred the Success of every Thing the Apostles could have said and done in Favour of their Master. 'Tis what any Government would have done in like Circumstances, who had it in their Power to do it; and which had they done, would have justified almost any Severities they could have made use of to the Apostles, for *affronting publick Justice*, and openly charging a *deserved Execution* as a wicked and impious Murther. But 'tis not pretended that this was ever done; and had it been publickly and authentickly done, it could never have been conceal'd; nor would the *Jews*, who have invented a Thousand malicious Stories, to asperse Christianity and the Author of it, have failed to have objected it in Evidence against us, had there been any Fact of this kind that they could have produced.

I cannot help adding on this Head, that had the Death of *Jesus Christ* been an Act of *National Justice*, had he been known and fairly and legally convicted of being a *Seducer* and Impostor, and Enemy to *Cæsar*, under which Characters his Enemies obtained his Condemnation; the very *Roman Governor Pontius Pilate*, who condemned him, would never have permitted the Apostles publicly to have charged his Death as a *National Murder*, and an Act of the highest Injustice and Wickedness, and to have proclaimed it such in the City of *Jerusalem*, and throughout all *Judea*. For this was a very high Reflection upon the *Roman Power* and Authority, and arraigning even the Justice of *Pilate* himself. And could he have vindicated his own Sentence, the Truth of the Accusation against *Christ*, and the Equity and Necessity of the Execution, he ought, and unquestionably would have done it, by securing and punishing the Apostles for their Insolence, by which he would have gratified the Rulers and Priests of the *Jewish Nation*; and by some publick *authentic Account* of the Nature of his Trial, and the Reasons of his Condemnation: Especially as it was usual for the *Roman Governors* of Provinces to record the memorable Events that happened in their Governments, and cause them to be transmitted to *Rome*. *Justin Martyr* * refers the *Roman Emperors*, to whom he inscribed his *Apology*, to the Acts of *Pilate* for his Death and Crucifixion; and after him, *Tertullian* † affirms, that *Pilate sent to Tiberius an Account of the Actions of Christ*. Now the Apostles declaring in the most publick Manner the Innocency of *Christ*, and his Resurrection from the Dead,

* Καὶ ταῦτα ὅτι γεγόνε, δύνασθε μαθεῖν ἐκ τῶν ἐπὶ Πόντιῳ Πιλάτῃ γνωσμένων Ἀκτῶν. *Apol. prima.* p. 56. *Vid. etiam ibid.* p. 71.

† Ea omnia super Christo Pilatus — Cæsari tunc Tiberio nuntiavit. *Apolog.* c. 21.

at *Jerusalem*, immediately after his Execution, whilst the Pharisees and Priests his Prosecutors, and the *Roman Governor* who judged and condemned him, were *on the Spot*, and capable, in the most solemn Manner, of vindicating themselves, and giving a true Character of *Jesus Christ*, and discovering the Wickedness and Imposture of the Apostles, could any Thing of this Kind been proved against them; is the strongest Demonstration that the Nature of the Thing is capable of, that both *Jews* and *Romans* knew *him* to be dead, that neither the one or other could prove on *the Apostles* any Fraud, and that they *themselves* had the utmost Certainty of the Truth of his Resurrection. And I believe this Evidence would never be objected against in any other Instance whatsoever.

I cannot help observing farther, under this Article, how impertinent the Objection is, *as to the late Publication of the Gospels*, and other Writings of the New Testament, which the Enemies of Christianity frequently throw out. Be the Publication *as late as they imagine*, the Cause of Infidelity will gain nothing by it. Books and Writings *there needed few* in the Beginning of Christianity. The Apostles published the Resurrection of *Christ* in every Corner of *Judea*, before their Priests and Rulers, in the Temple, before large Assemblies of the People, in *Jerusalem* their Capital, before the *Roman Governors*, every where, and upon every Occasion. They concealed nothing; the Resurrection of *Christ* was *the Capital Article* they preached, and upon which they founded the whole Structure of the Religion they taught. Every Body in *Judea*, and other Nations, knew it to be *the Foundation-Stone* of Christianity; so that Books were almost needless, whilst the Witnesses of the Resurrection lived; and therefore could the Priests and Pharisees, and Scribes, have given any *authentick Account*, to

have confronted that given by the Preaching of the Apostles, they ought instantly to have done it, when the Apostles first began their Ministry, and unquestionably would have done it if they could; and their never doing it may be justly looked on as a sufficient Evidence of the Badness of their Cause, and is a noble Vindication of the Integrity and Truth of the Apostles, in the Testimony they gave to their Master's Resurrection. Again,

X. The *immediate Success of Christianity*, and the Number of Converts made by the Preaching of the Apostles, upon this *Foundation Article* of the Resurrection of *Christ*, is another Circumstance in favour of the Truth of their Testimony to the Resurrection. I am far from thinking or asserting, that *mere Success* is an Argument of a good Cause, or a proper Proof of Truth; but what I affirm is, that the Prevalence of the Doctrine of *Christ's* Resurrection, at the Period of Time when first preached, and in those Circumstances in which 'twas first published, is a very strong Argument of the Truth of it. In a few Weeks, about *Three Thousand* Persons were brought over to the Belief of it, their Number was continually encreasing, they soon grew to *Five Thousand*, and encreased into a *Multitude*, and that even in *Jerusalem*, where *Jesus* had, but a little before, been tried, and condemned, and crucified. Now 'tis not possible to conceive how this Number of Converts could be made in so short a Space, upon any other Foundation than that of their being convinced of the Truth of this important Fact of the Resurrection. The only Method taken was by publicly and privately preaching the Doctrine, and confirming it by miraculous Gifts and Appearances. No kind of worldly Interest was ever proposed, or could tempt them to embrace it. Neither their Rulers nor their Priests favoured it; it was a Doc-
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trine they hated, and the Preachers of which they persecuted. The Apostles were *unlearned and ignorant Men*, whose Preaching had nothing to recommend it, but the Truth and Evidence that attended it. Those who embraced it had all possible Opportunities of enquiring into the Proofs of it. The Miracles of *Christ*, his Trial, Condemnation, and Death and Resurrection, were Things *just transacted*, as to the Truth or Falseness of which, they had it in their Power to make the *most critical Examination*. As they conversed with the Apostles, and those who pretended to be the Witnesses of the Resurrection, they had full Leisure and sufficient Means to compare their Testimony, to see whether there was any *Contradiction* and Inconsistency in it, whether any Appearance of fraudulent Management; in a Word, fully to satisfy themselves in every Article, *from Friends and Enemies*, in which there was need of Light or Explication. And to imagine that such a Number of Men should so readily fall into the Belief of *Christ's* Resurrection, if the Account of it was a *known Fraud*, and what they might easily have been satisfied was a real Imposition, and when they could not but know, if the Thing had been Fact, that he had been fairly and *equitably tried*, and solemnly and *justly* condemned, and *executed as a Deceiver*, but a few Weeks before; argues, I think, a *Credulousness* as unreasonable and *abject* as any that can be mentioned. Especially considering that a strong *National Prejudice* rendered such a Belief more difficult, and especially more unlikely to prevail amongst the Generality of the *Jews*. For the Acknowledgment of *Jesus*, as crucified, risen again, and ascended into Heaven, to be Lord and Messiah, was giving up at once all Notion of a *temporal Messiah*, and sacrificing that *favourite Opinion*, that he was to redeem the *Jews* from the *Roman* Power, and make them a free, and *independent*,
and

and victorious *Nation*. So that I think 'tis not possible to conceive how a more *unpopular Doctrine* could be preached, and how it could so soon have prevailed, had there not been the strongest Demonstration of the Truth of it. I add,

XI. That *the Gift of the Holy Spirit*, in the extraordinary and miraculous Effects of it, are a farther substantial Evidence of the Truth of the Resurrection and Ascension of *Jesus*. Some there are that laugh at this Evidence, and think 'tis ridiculous to talk of proving one Miracle by another. But let us consider the Fact. When *Jesus* was alive, before his Death, he solemnly promised, and frequently, that he would send down the Holy Spirit to supply his Place, and be an Advocate for him in the World. * He that believeth on me, out of his Belly shall flow Rivers of living Water, which he spake of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive. Again: † The Comforter, the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my Name, he shall teach you all Things. Again: ‡ If I go not away, the Comforter will not come, but if I depart I will send him unto you. — When he the Spirit of Truth is come, he shall guide you into all Truth. And just before his Ascension, he commanded them ||, that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the Promise of the Father, which ye have heard of me; for ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many Days hence. Ye shall receive Power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you, and ye shall be Witnesses unto me, both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost Parts of the Earth. Let us now see, if the Event corresponded to the Promise?

Ten Days after the last Promise, the Disciples being at Jerusalem, where they were ordered to abide,

* John vii. 38, 39.
xvi. 7—13.

† John xiv. 26.
|| Acts i. 4, 5, 8.

‡ John

on the Feast of *Pentecost*, when the *Jews* from all Parts of the Country were present at *Jerusalem*, the Apostles had *the Gift of Languages* conferred on them; so that they spoke to all the *Jews*, who came up to the Feast from all Parts of the World, in the Language spoken in that particular Country, where they severally lived; so that they themselves acknowledged: *We bear every Man in his own Tongue wherein we were born*, Parthians, Medes, &c. *The very Gift this* of all others, that was necessary to qualify them to be Christ's *Witnesses to the uttermost Ends of the Earth*; a Gift conferred on them in a large City, at a solemn Festival, when the *Jews* out of all Parts of the World were present, and Witnesses of the Truth of it, and which immediately had such an Effect, and carried such strong Conviction, as that Three Thousand Persons became the Disciples of *Christ*. And there are so many Circumstances to confirm the Fact, as carry in them the fullest Demonstration of the Truth of it.

'Twas given to great Numbers, and in a great variety of Effects. * 'Twas communicated by Prayer and Imposition of Hands to the *Samaritans*, upon their receiving the *Christian Faith*; next to *Cornelius* † and his Family, who were *uncircumcised Gentiles*, tho' *devout Ones*, and Worshipers of the true God, who in Consequence of it *spoke with Tongues and glorified God*. 'Twas after this conferred on the *idolatrous Gentiles* upon their believing in *Christ*, fully to assure them that they were accepted of God, without any Regard or Conformity to the Law of *Moses*, equally with the *Jews* themselves. And in the Communication of this Gift, there could be no possible Deceit or Imposition, by the Fraud or Subtlety of the Apostles. The Question here is not, what the Apostles did, but what the Converts they made received. If they could be deceived as to the Truth

* Acts viii. 17.

† Acts x. 44, 46.

of any Miracles said to be done by the Apostles, they could not be imposed on in Things, to which they were themselves actually conscious.

Amongst other Gifts of the Holy Spirit, which are said to be conferred, were these very extraordinary Ones, of *healing Diseases, working Miracles, discerning of Spirits, knowledge of Languages, or the Power of speaking in different Tongues, and the Interpretations of those Languages or Tongues*, where it doth not appear that there was any Capacity or Power of speaking them. In all these Instances, and others that might be mentioned, the Proof of the Facts, depended on *the Consciousness* of the Persons who received these Gifts, and the Conviction of those who heard and saw them exercised. The Apostles pretended to confer them, and if they did not confer them on any Persons, 'twas impossible to persuade them, contrary to their own Consciousness, that they had them; and a *publick Appeal* to any Persons, who never received them, that they had them and exercised them, must have been the height of Weakness and Folly, and exposed him that made it to Contempt as a Madman or Impostor.

But how is the Fact in this Case? If the Author of the *Acts of the Apostles* may be suspected of relating what he was not, a *competent Judge* of the Truth of, or as designing to impose on Mankind by a false History; yet *the Letters* of St. Paul are quite free from *all Suspicion* of this kind; who wrote of Things he was *immediately concerned* in, and directed his Epistles to Persons, who were capable of passing an impartial Judgment, whether the Facts he appeals to were real or not.

To the *Corinthians* then he appeals *, that in every Thing they were enriched by Christ in all Utterance, and in all Knowledge, by which the Testimony of Christ

* 1 Cor. i. 5, 7.

was confirmed amongst them, so that they came behind in no Gift; that his Preaching amongst them was confirmed † by the Demonstration of the Spirit and of Power; † that to some of them was given by the Spirit the Word of Wisdom, to another by the same Spirit the Word of Knowledge, to another Faith, to another the Gift of Healing, to another the working of Miracles, to another Prophecy, to another discerning of Spirits, to another diverse kinds of Tongues, to another the Interpretation of Tongues—for that by one Spirit they were all baptized into one Body—and had all been made to drink into one Spirit. He appeals to them, that in their publick Assemblies, they exercised these various Gifts. || When ye come together, every one of you hath a Psalm, hath a Doctrine, hath a Tongue, hath a Revelation, hath an Interpretation. He gives them proper Rules, for the orderly and profitable Exercise of these Gifts; and tho' the Gift of Tongues had been misapplied for Ostentation, yet he orders: ** Brethren, covet to Prophecy, and forbid not to speak with Tongues. In his Epistle to the Galatians ††, he publickly appeals to them, that they had received this Gift of the Spirit of God. Received ye the Spirit by the Works of the Law, or by the bearing of Faith? He that ministrerh to you the Spirit, and worketh Miracles amongst you, doth he it by the Works of the Law, or by the bearing of Faith? Because ye are Sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your Hearts. †† Hence he speaks of their being led by the Spirit, or acting agreeable to the Design of their receiving it; and ||| of the Fruits of the Spirit, or the Virtues which they ought to practice in Consequence of the Spirit, that was given them. In like manner he tells the Ephesians *, that

† 1 Cor. ii. 4. † xii. 8—13. || xiv. 26. ** xiv. 39.
 †† Gal. iii. 25. †† v. 18. ||| v. 22, &c.
 * Eph. ii. 18.

thro' Christ we have both an Access by one Spirit unto the Father, Gentiles as well as Jews having received the same Spirit, and thereby the very same Confirmation, of their being both equally admitted, as Children to the Acceptance and Favour of God. Many other Passages of like Nature might be mentioned. Now upon the Supposition, that none of these extraordinary Gifts were conferred upon the *Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians*, and other Converts; that they never had the Gift of Languages, nor the Interpretation of them, nor the Power of working Miracles, nor healing Diseases, nor any Inspiration for publick Instruction, Edification, Comfort, and carrying on the Services of Publick Worship; what must we think of *Paul*, and the Persons he wrote to? *Paul* must be known by every Individual of each Church to whom he sent his Letters, to be a *Fool, a Cheat and Impostor*, for appealing to them for the Truth of Facts, which they were never conscious to, and as to every one of which they knew his Appeal to be notoriously false.

If we consider farther the Reasons of his appealing to these Facts, the Evidence of the reality of them will be yet stronger. He urges them as the substantial Proofs of the Truth, and *superior Excellency* of the *Christian* Dispensation to the *Mosaick*.
 * *If the ministration of Death—was glorious—how shall not the Ministration of the Spirit be rather glorious?* But would any Man in his Senses have made this Appeal, if he did not know the *Consciences* of those he wrote to would testify to the Truth of it? Would he thus *apologize* for *Christianity* in a manner, that he knew must *destroy* absolutely the Credit of it, and entirely spoil his own Character as a Preacher

* 2 Cor. iii. 8.

of it? Is an Imposture to be supported by known Lies? Would he have committed such Fallshoods to *Writings*, and thereby left them in open Record against himself, and the Religion he taught? Could he ever have *revisited* those he had thus scandalously abused? Could *Christianity* ever have prevailed, if one of the principal Arguments he made Use of to support it, was *universally known* to be a Fallshood and Imposture? Would Men have suffered Persecution and Death for embracing, and adhering to a Religion, the Preacher of which was so *shameless* a Deceiver?

In the Beginning of Christianity 'twas a Question of great Importance, whether the *Gentiles* could be Saved by *Christianity only*, without embracing the Law of *Moses*? The *Jewish* Converts and Teachers warmly insisted upon their conformity to the *Mosaick* Law. *Paul* as zealously pleaded against it. What was the Argument to determine this important Controversy? The Gift of the Spirit was allowed on both sides to be *decisive* in the Point. *Paul* therefore tells the *Ephesians*, * that they were sealed by the Spirit of God to the Day of Redemption; the *Romans*, † that the Spirit itself beareth Witness with our Spirit, that we are the Children of God; and the *Galatians*: ‡ This only would I learn of you, received ye the Spirit by the Works of the Law, or by the Hearing of Faith? Received the Spirit! If they could have justly answered with the *Ephesians*: || We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost; could the *Galatians* have thought the Man less than distracted, for putting the whole Controversy on a Foundation, which he and they equally knew to have nothing of Truth to support it?

* Eph. iv. 30. † Rom. viii. 16. ‡ Gal. iii. 2. || Act. xix. 2.

In the *Corinthian Church*, *St. Paul's Authority* and *Doctrine* were opposed by a *Jewish Teacher*, who set himself up for an *Apostle*, in order to destroy his Credit. How doth he defend himself against this Attack? Why by appealing to his *Doctrine*, and the Spirit he conferred in Confirmation of it.* *If he that cometh preacheth another Jesus, whom we have not preached, or if ye receive another Spirit which ye have not received——ye might well bear with him; for I suppose I was not a whit behind the very chiefest Apostles. † My speech and my preaching was in Demonstration of the Spirit. ‡ God hath made us able Ministers of the Spirit. The Signs of an Apostle were wrought amongst you——in Signs and Wonders and mighty Deeds.* But could he hope to succeed by such a false Appeal? Would not the false Apostle have immediately stigmatized him for a Deceiver, and have had all the Advantage over him that he could have wished? Would he not have been immediately condemned himself for a false Apostle, and a deceitful Worker? Grant him but common Sense and Prudence, and he could never be guilty of such a Conduct; he could never put such Arguments against himself into the Mouth of an Enemy, and that when he was at a Distance from him, could not support his own Assertion, nor vindicate himself against any Imputations of Falshood and Deceit that might be thrown on him. The Truth is, that both *Jew* and *Gentile Converts* knew the Gifts of the Spirit, were real, and 'tis absolutely impossible that *St. Paul's Epistles* can ever be accounted for upon any Principles without this Supposition.

Now the Argument from hence for the Resurrection of *Christ* can never be subverted. He promised it as the Consequence of his Resurrection,

* 2 Cor. xi. 4, 5. † 1 Cor. ii. 4. ‡ 2 Cor. iii. 6. 2 Cor. xii. 12.
and

and to qualify his Apostles for being *Witnesses* of it amongst all Nations. He promised it should be given *within a few Days* after his Ascension, and that it should be conferred on them at *Jerusalem*. What would have been the Consequence, if no such Gifts had been vouchsafed, and the Disciples continued sitting at *Jerusalem*, and waiting for this Promise of the Spirit without ever receiving it? Would not this have been urged, and justly urged, as a *false Prediction* and Promise to the Apostles, never accomplished and made good? Would not Infidels have thrown this out as an Objection against *Christ's* being risen and ascended? But the Promise was fulfilled, according to *the Time and Place* foretold, and publickly made good in the Presence of many Persons, and the Spirit they received, declared by those who had it, to be *shed forth* by Jesus * *whom God raised up, and exalted to his own right Hand*. The same Gift was conferred by those who first obtained it on others, immediately on their Belief in *Christ*, and as a Testimony that their Faith rendered them acceptable to God. In all the Controversies between the *Jewish* and *Gentile* Christians, the Reality of this Gift was never called in Question, nor did they charge either the other with Fraud or Falshood, for pretending to extraordinary Gifts which they had not.

The immediate Change of Principles and Conduct in the Apostles, their getting at once free from all their national Prejudices relating to a *temporal Messiah* and Salvation, and preaching Repentance and Faith as the great Conditions of Acceptance with God, can never be accounted for but by owning it as the Effect of some very *extraordinary Illumination*.

* Act. ii. 32, 33.

The speedy Progress of the Gospel, the Publication of it amongst almost all Nations, by the first Preachers of it, would have been *highly improbable*, I may say *impossible*, without these Gifts of the Spirit, enabling them to preach and explain the Religion of *Christ* to the different People they taught, in their respective Languages. So that besides the manifold Testimonies to the Fact itself in the N. T. writings, there are the strongest possible Circumstances to confirm these Testimonies; and I will venture to affirm that there are no past Facts whatsoever that can be named, which taking in all Circumstances, have so strong a Foundation to establish and support them. Now consider these Gifts as the Accomplishment of a Prophecy frequently repeated; made by *Christ* before his Death, and after his Resurrection; made by him as the Proof of his Ascension to and Reward by God his Father, and to qualify his Apostles to preach his Gospel to all Nations; consider it as promised by these Apostles to others as an Encouragement to believe in *Christ*, and actually conferred in consequence of Faith in him, and large Numbers of Converts instantly made on the first Effusion of it; consider the Nature of the Gift itself, truly surprising and miraculous, and discovering itself in an amazing Variety of Instances, and yet in all these Instances calculated to confirm the Gospel Truth, and promote the Ends of publick Piety, and the rational Worship of God; and the Conclusion of *Peter* will I think appear irrefragably strong: * *Therefore let all the House of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus whom ye crucified both Lord and Christ.*

XI. This Testimony of the Apostles to the Truth of the Resurrection of *Christ* is farther confirmed by

* Act. ii. 36.

the Sufferings they were exposed to, and actually endured upon Account of it: Sufferings they might easily have escaped either by *Silence*, or denying the Fact they publicly attested; for the High Priest and Council threatned and commanded them *not to speak at all, nor teach in the Name of Jesus*. They might have taught what other Doctrine they pleased, had they left but *Jesus* out of their Preaching. They might have inculcated *the Resurrection* of the Dead, and a future State, or *denied it* just as they would; and in either case have found a *strong Party*, in the Pharisees or Sadducees, to have supported them. And if the Miracles ascribed to them, and the Gifts of the H. Ghost they received and conveyed, were, as some suppose them, *mere Delusion and Deception*; yet as they found them take, they might have gone on to have *plaid them off* before the People, and have joyned *either Sect*, or set up a *new Sect* for themselves with an Assurance of Success, without any Danger from the People or Rulers, had they let their crucified Master *sleep quietly* in his Grave, and not arraigned the publick Justice, nor opposed the Prejudices of the Nation, by affirming that he was *unjustly condemned*, and that God had raised him from the Dead. But the Apostles and first Christians were not thus to be silenced. They preached *Christ* every where, and defended their Conduct, by declaring that they acted *in Obedience to God*, and that therefore they could not desist out of Regard to any *human Authority*.

They knew by the *most certain Predictions* of their Master what was the Treatment they were to expect from the World; that they were to be *as Sheep in the midst of Wolves*, that they were to be *delivered up to Councils*, that they were to be

* Mat. x. 16—22.

*Scourged in the Synagogues, brought before Governours and Kings for his sake, and hated of all Men for their preaching his Doctrine. So that they set out as Witnesses of Christ, not with any Prospect of popular Applause, or the Countenance of their Rulers, or making it a Lucrative and profitable Employment, but with the most certain Expectation of enduring whatever Power, and Malice, and Cruelty could inflict upon them. Nor did their Expectations deceive them. They were immediately threatned, imprisoned and scourged. Stephen one of their Companions, was stoned to Death. James, one of the Apostles, was murdered by Herod, and Peter reserved for a second Sacrifice, tho' miraculously delivered by an Angel. In a Word, there was only one Way of approving themselves the Ministers of Christ, and that was by much Patience, by Afflictions, by Necessities, by Distresses, by Stripes, by Imprisonments, in Tumults, by Labours, by Watchings and Fastings. Yea St. Paul, speaking of himself and his Brethren, the Apostles, says in stronger Terms: I think that God hath set forth us the Apostles last, as it were appointed to Death; for we are made a Spectacle to the World, and unto Angels and Men. We are Fools, we are weak, we are despised; even unto this present Hour we both hunger and thirst, and are naked, and are buffeted, and have no certain Dwelling-place, and labour, working with our own Hands; we are reviled, persecuted, and defamed; we are made as the Filth of the World, and as the Offscouring of all Things unto this Day†. And this Account of St. Paul, relating to the Apostles in particular, is confirmed by the Testimony * of one, who, in some Persons*

“ Judg-

† 2 Cor. ii. 4.—9.

‡ 1 Cor. iv. 9.—13.

* Nero — quæsitissimis pœnis affectit, quos per flagitia invisos
Vulgus

Judgment, will be esteemed as a more credible Evidence; who assures us of Christians in general, that so early as the Times of *Nero*, “ they were hated “ for their Crimes, that they held a *damnable Superstition*, and were convicted and executed, not “ so much for the Crime of firing the City of “ *Rome*, as thro’ the Hatred of Mankind; so that at “ length, they were even pitied, tho’ Criminals, “ and worthy of the extremest Punishment.” This was the Opinion that Mankind in general had of the Apostles and primitive Christians, and the Treatment they almost every where met with; so that *Paul*, with the utmost Reason, might affirm: *If in this Life only we have Hope in Christ, we are of all Men most miserable, or piteable.*

What I would infer from hence is, not immediately that the Doctrine of the Resurrection was true, but that the Apostles preached this Doctrine, because they believed that they were obliged by the Authority of God himself to do it, for the Conviction and Salvation of Mankind. This they themselves declared: * *We cannot but speak the Things that we have seen and heard. We are his Witnesses of these Things, and so also is the Holy Ghost which God hath given to them that obey him.* And what better Proofs could they give of the Fulness of their Persuasion in this Respect? Would they have wilfully exposed themselves, as with one Consent, to the National Enmity, the Fury of Persecution, the Rage and Hatred of Mankind, and to the perpe-

Vulgus Christianos appellabat — Repressaque in præsens exitiabilis superstitio rursus erumpebat — Igitur — haud perinde in crimine incendii, quam odio humani generis convicti sunt — Unde quanquam adversus Sontes, et novissima exempla meritos, miseratio oriebatur. Tacit. Annal. l. 15. c. 44.

* *Act. iv. 20. — v. 32.*

tual Hazard of Death, for publishing *as a Fact* what they neither believed, nor had any Divine Commission to teach; and which was of *little* or no *Importance* to them, in a *lucrative Design* of setting up for the Teachers and Leaders of Mankind? Why so *obstinately tenacious* of the Name of *Jesus*? Why could they not have set up *Moses* or *Elias*, or *David*, or some one or other of their antient *Great Men*, that was esteemed and honoured by the whole Nation, in the Room of *Jesus*, and pretended to communicate the same Gifts of the Spirit in Confirmation of their Doctrine? If indeed they knew they had a Commission from God to teach in the Name of *Jesus*, and knew him to be certainly risen from the Dead, their whole Conduct is rational and consistent on these Suppositions, and no other; and their Fortitude and Patience, under their various continued Labours and Persecutions, easily and most certainly to be accounted for. And this is all I want to be allowed me on this Head, *viz.* that notwithstanding their once *almost incurable Prejudices* against the Resurrection of *Christ*, they were, by the *irresistible Force of Evidence*, so firmly persuaded of the Truth of it, as that they published it to others without Fear of Suffering and Death, as a Matter of Conscience and Duty. The Consequence of this will be, that the Accounts we have of *Christ's* Appearances after his Death, are to be depended on; that the Disciples themselves thought and knew them to be real, and that they did not impose on the World by *known fictitious Stories*; and that we have as good Reasons at least for believing their Representations of these Facts, as we have to believe either the Integrity of any other Writers, or that they had sufficient Information and full Conviction of the Truth of all or any of the Things they have recorded in their several Histories. I cannot help adding,

XII. Lastly, that *their own avowed Principles* of Religion, and which they appear to have firmly believed, corroborates their Testimony, and renders it more worthy of Credit and Acceptation: Principles, that inculcated *the utmost Integrity* of Disposition and Conduct, that obliged to all *the essential Duties* of a rational Piety and acceptable Virtue, that established the Belief of a World to come, and a future Judgment, and declared all Men accountable for their present Actions, whether good or evil, and that their *everlasting State* should be determined for Happiness or Misery, according to the Nature of them. Now that Men, who evidently had *worthy Sentiments* of the moral Perfections of God, who believed a future State, and themselves and all Men accountable for their present Behaviour, who allowed that Truth, Sincerity, and Righteousness, were of essential and *necessary Obligation*, and every where uniformly, constantly, consistently professed, and, to all Appearance, practiced, the most exalted, comprehensive, *exemplary Piety* and Goodness; and thus gave all the strongest Indications of a *sound Judgment*, a good Understanding, *Reverence for Deity*, and *deep Sense* of true Religion and Virtue; should yet be, in reality, either *the weakest* or *the wickedest* of Men, is a Supposition contrary to all the strongest Probabilities whatsoever. And one or other of these must have been the Case, upon the Scheme of Infidelity.

If they were *sincere*, and believed the Doctrine of the Resurrection they preached, but were *deceived* and imposed on as to the Fact itself; they were a Set of *contemptibly weak and superstitious Men*; whose Senses were thus easily deluded, and who had not Reason and Judgment enough to discover

a plain and *certain Imposture*. Instead of the Things *they saw and heard*, we must say, the Things *they fancied they saw and heard*. Instead of eating and conversing with, and handling *Christ*, they *only imagined* they did so, but in reality did neither. Instead of receiving themselves, and communicating extraordinary Gifts to others, in the Name of *Christ*, there were none of these Gifts at all, nothing but an *ungrounded Imagination*, nothing but an *universal Imposture* and Superstition that possessed and influenced them. And this, for ought I know, may be accounted a *mighty reasonable Supposition*, by the modern *Engrossers* of Good Sense and Reason; tho' in any other Case, such a Way of accounting for Facts, reported by many Eye and Ear Witnesses, would be treated with *deserved Ridicule* and Contempt. Had the Apostles been prejudiced in Favour of this Doctrine *before-hand*, and given any Marks of a *credulous superstitious Disposition*, such a kind of Objection would have had more Appearance of Reason; tho' how several Persons, affirming in the *most solemn* Manner they saw and conversed, and eat and drank with, and touched and handled another Person, and that several Times, and for the Space of *Forty Days*, could, after all, be imposed on in these Particulars, seems to me to be next to impossible for any reasonable Man to suppose.

If there was any just *Ground of Suspicion* in the Case, one would rather *suspect the Honesty* and Integrity of the Reporters, than *their Deception*, and being imposed on. But even this, in the Case of the Apostles, will appear to be the most monstrous and *unnatural Supposition* in the World. For it supposes them to be *wilful Impostors* and Cheats, spreading a *notorious Lye*, which they knew to be a Lye,
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in Spite of their own Consciences and Convictions, and exposing themselves to all manner of Sufferings and Death upon account of it; tho' they professed the Love of Truth, and the Belief of all the great Principles of rational Religion, and the awful Sanctions of eternal Rewards and Punishments; and in all other Instances appeared to believe these Principles, and to practice an unblameable and exemplary Virtue. Now that Men, upon such Principles, should set out with, and carry on an Imposture, and propagate it throughout the World, and persist in doing it 'till Death; that such a Number of Men as the Twelve Apostles, and others, should have the same determined Wickedness, should be *constant* to themselves and one another, should be faithful to the Cheat, and never once discover or renounce it, no, not when they came to die for it; that they should suffer and die for their Testimony to this Fact, if they knew it to be a Falsehood, not only without any Terrors and Fears of a divine Vengeance in a future World, for the Imposture they had been carrying on, but with Chearfulness, Joy, and full Assurance of the Reward of future Glory; this Conduct implies so *many Contradictions*, and argues such *horrible Impiety*, and hardened Consciences, as can never be *parallel'd* in any History, and exceeds all reasonable Imagination and Belief.

Let me add, That *the Nature of Christianity*, as taught by the Apostles in the Name of *the raised Jesus*, is a Consideration that adds to *the Credibility* of their Testimony to *Christ's Resurrection*. 'Twas a Religion different from that of *Jews and Gentiles*, which set the World free from *the Ceremonies* of the one, and *the Superstitions* of the other. It had *the One God* for its Object: The *One Jesus Christ* for

for the only Mediator, or the Means of conveying divine Blessings to Men; and thus was calculated to put an End to all the various Kinds of Idolatry that had been practiced in the World. The Worship of God it recommended was that in *Spirit and Truth*, to abrogate all the Pomp of Sacrifices, and to introduce a rational and acceptable Method of Devotion amongst all Mankind. It inculcated all the great Duties of *Moral Virtue* in private and social Life, and declared that there can be no kind of *Compensations* and *Attonements* for the want of them. It established as one of its primary Articles, the Belief of a *future State*, and the Accountableness of all Men at an *impartial Tribunal*, and future Rewards and Punishments as the Consequences of Mens present Behaviour. And being thus established on its *proper Foundation*, it is in its Nature fit to be, what it was designed for, *the Religion of the World*, and capable of being received by all Nations, consistent with their various Forms of Civil Government, and *without Alteration* of any of those Laws that were consistent with natural Equity, or necessary to the publick Happiness. And on these Accounts it was *the first* and only *System* of pure unmixed Religion, that ever had been published and taught by any Men whatsoever; was superior in its Nature to the *Mosaick Dispensation*, and to all the various Religions that had been introduced and established by Means of the most *celebrated Philosophers* and Law-givers. The Writings of *Plato* and *Cicero* are now, many of them, extant, and the Comparison may be easily made by any Man that hath Learning or Leisure sufficient; and there are Intimations enough relating to the Religions that were settled by the most *celebrated Law-givers* of Antiquity, that will abundantly discover

cover their Nature, and in what, and how far they were superior or inferior, in Truth and Excellency, to the Doctrine and Religion of *Jesus Christ*.

Now who were the Persons, that were chiefly employ'd in propagating this *incomparable Religion*? When *Peter* and *John*, two of them, appeared before the Rulers, *they perceived*, 'tis said, *that they were unlearned and ignorant Men*; Men of a quite private Life and Education, that had never attended the *celebrated Masters* of their own Nation, and had none of them any of the Advantages of Learning whatsoever. *Whence had these Men all this Wisdom*, is a Question much too important to be answered with a Jest or Sneer. Did they learn the Religion they taught from their Ancestors? Were the Principles they propagated infused into them by Education? Did they teach the Doctrine of any one *particular Sect*, or Party amongst them? Nothing of this can be with Truth pretended. One of their main Principles, that of a *spiritual Messiah* and Salvation, was contrary to the Prejudices of the whole Nation. Another, that of the *Admission of the Gentiles*, as well as *Jews* to the Church and People of God, *without Circumcision* and Conformity to the Law of *Moses*, was looked on by the Body of the People *with Abhorrence*, as a false and impious Principle. Their teaching that *nothing but Faith and Repentance*, or believing the Principles of true Religion, and practising accordingly, was necessary to *Justification*, the Pardon of all past Sins, and the future Favour of God, was contrary to the sense of the People in general, and every Sect and Party amongst them. The *Pharisaical Notion* of a Resurrection they cleared from its Uncertainty, stript of its Absurdity, and preached a Doctrine concerning it, rational and noble, and which will be found,

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upon the Principles of *true Philosophy*, to be the only Doctrine that can support the Belief and Certainty of a future State, and the Retribution of final Rewards and Punishments. Their *Morality* was perfect, rational, and uniform, their Precepts relating to it *short and easy*, and the Motives with which they enforced it *of the highest Importance* in themselves, strengthened by the Views of a Divine Authority, and such as had never been made use of before by their wisest and most celebrated *Rabbies*. I ask here again, how they came by this Wisdom? By Education and National Persuasion they had it not. Yea, how came they by it *all in an Instant* and of a sudden? Contrary to all their own former Prejudices? Without human Instruction? In Opposition to all the Principles of their Education? Did they get it from the Writings of *the learned Greeks and Romans*? The Wisdom of those Writers never taught it. The Apostles had never seen their Books. They could not so much *as read them*. *Annas, Caiaphas*, the Kindred of the High-Priest, and whole *Sanhedrim* at *Jerusalem*, knew they were *unlearned and ignorant Men*. How then must we account for this *amazing Appearance*? An Appearance that amazed and astonished the High-Priest and his Council, who *took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus*; that perplexed and divided them, that made them *doubt whereunto the Thing would grow*, and so distressed them, that they knew not what to resolve on, nor what Methods to pursue, to stop the Apostles Progress, and vindicate their own Conduct. And in Truth, 'tis an Instance to be parallel'd in no History of past Ages, that a few Publicans and Fishermen should teach and propagate a Religion, different from that of their own Country, containing confessedly all the rational

rational Principles of Piety, a full System of moral Virtue, upon the noblest and most powerful Motives, and excelling all that was ever taught by Lawgivers and Philosophers; a Religion not beneath the Regard of the wisest and most learned Men, nor above the Capacities of the meanest; a Religion fitted for all Nations, all Systems of civil Government, all Ranks and Degrees of Men in general; that they should teach such a Religion without Learning, Study, Education; teach it *at once*, contrary to all their former Sentiments, avow it without Fear before Magistrates, Councils, Priests and Princes; that they should do, I say, all this without *human Instruction* or *Divine Inspiration*, is a Miracle in itself the greatest of all others; and what is *more surprising*, a Miracle without Human or Divine Agency, or Cause to account for it.

But the Truth of *Christ's* Resurrection solves this amazing Difficulty at once, and accounts for the whole Conduct of the Apostles. If they saw and conversed with him, and had the fullest Demonstration that he was risen, their Boldness in asserting it before the Rulers and People, who had murdered him, is natural and reasonable. If they had *the Spirit of Truth* and Wisdom, or Divine Influence and Inspiration, to direct and instruct them, their *sudden Alteration* of Sentiment is no longer to be wondred at, nor their preaching a Religion, in all its Parts excelling, either the Wisdom of *Jewish* Scribes, or the most learned Philosophers amongst the *Gentiles*. And upon the whole, till these Things can be fairly and candidly accounted for, upon certain Principles of Experience and Truth, they will, in Conjunction with the other Part of the Evidence that hath been before-mentioned, amount to such a Proof of the Truth of *Christ's* Resurrection,

as I should hope will put even *sober and thoughtful Unbelievers*, upon a serious Review of this important Question, and abundantly confirm those, who have *received the Truth as it is in Jesus*, in the Profession of their Faith, and their strict Adherence to the Hope of the Gospel. And here I shall at present rest this Matter with my Reader. But that I may not be thought purposely to omit any Objections against the Truth of this Fact, as though I thought them *unanswerable*, I shall soon consider such as appear to me to be of any real Weight and Consequence; and particularly those, of *Christ's not appearing publickly* to the People, the *Insufficiency of Historical Evidence* to support a *Divine Faith*, the *Incompetency of real Miracles for the Proof of Doctrines*, and the *Impossibility* of their Performance.

F I N I S.



